

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE  
INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND





# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND

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TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
MY BROTHER  
ALBERT MORSE USHER, 107th U.S. INFANTRY  
WOUNDED, OCTOBER 17, 1918  
IN THE BATTLES FOR THE HINDENBURG LINE  
DIED AT CAMIERS, OCTOBER 28, 1918

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## PREFACE

THE present volume has been planned and written with a view to the needs of students beginning work in economic history. For this reason matters have been included that do not lie strictly within the field of industrial history, notably the chapters dealing with agrarian questions. These problems could hardly be deemed essential to the understanding of the development of industry in the literal sense, but such material is ordinarily included in the introductory courses in economic history even if the course is described as "industrial history." This slight inconsistency in nomenclature tends to create some confusion between the scope of the term "industrial history" and "economic history" in general. It is not, of course, serious, but it is perhaps better that these terms should be used with some care in the titles of books. Strictly speaking, industrial history is of no more than co-ordinate importance with agrarian history and commercial history, though the problems of these phases of economic history are, relatively more difficult and ill-suited to the capacities of an elementary class. The emphasis currently laid upon industrial history is thus thoroughly justified upon pedagogical grounds, but it would be unfortunate to allow the expediency of this course to obscure the just proportions between the different phases of the general field.

The space devoted to the first three chapters may seem disproportionate to some, but it is believed that the text of the chapters will sufficiently explain their place in the book. If it should be desired to confine attention more exclusively to England, it would not be necessary for a class to read the first two chapters, though the characterization of the forms of industrial organization (pp. 4-17) should in that case be presented by the teacher. It is believed that these chapters will prove particularly useful in courses given with especial reference to work in sociology and economics as distinct from

purely descriptive history. The slight departure from the narrowly nationalistic point of view that usually dominates the writing of economic history makes the present volume a comprehensive survey of the general problems of industrial history.

The references for reading in connection with the text represent personal experience with classes, and it is believed that no books are recommended for use with classes that are not within the compass of ordinary students. An attempt has been made to suggest reading along the line of all the varied interests presented by the subject, so that each student may have opportunity to give expression to his personal tastes. Pains have been taken to make the lists sufficiently inclusive to bring the student in touch with all the critical studies of primary importance, and as most of the works contain bibliographies it would not be difficult to get in touch with the literature on each subject.

In addition to the obligations to writers which are acknowledged in the text or in the notes, the author is greatly indebted to his colleagues at Cornell University, most especially to Professor A. A. Young, without whose encouragement and advice this book would not have been written. Professor W. F. Willcox, Professor C. H. Hull, and Mr. R. A. Campbell have given me the benefit of their advice on many points which involved some departure from conventional views. I wish also to express my obligations to Professor E. F. Gay, whose teaching was instrumental in the formulation of the problems that have since then claimed my best attention. While it is not my intention to imply that he is in any way responsible for views expressed in the present volume, my work has been a direct outcome of the stimulus of his teaching.

ABBOTT PAYSON USHER

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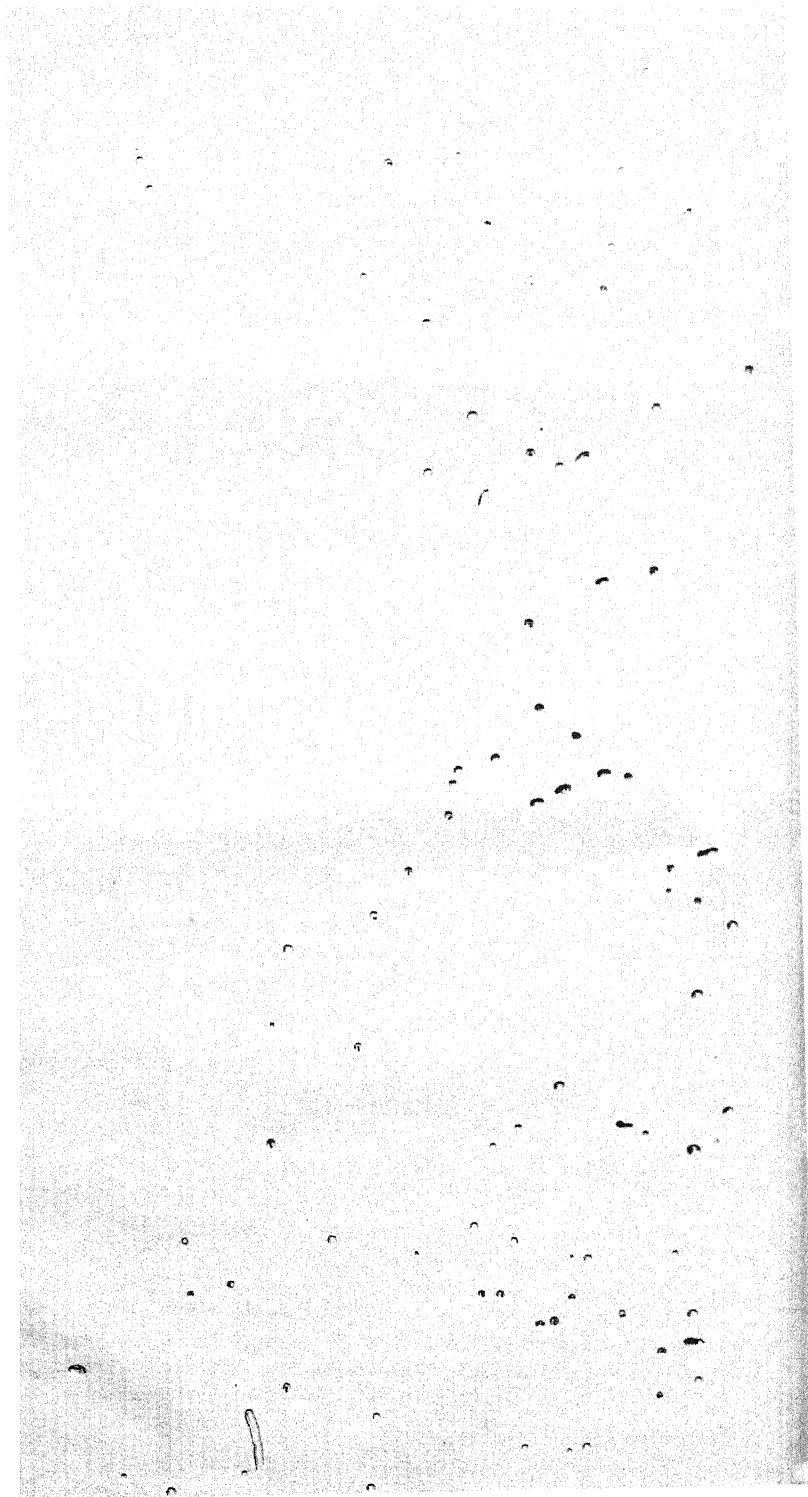
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# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND

## CHAPTER I

### FORMS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION

#### I. SOCIALISTS AND INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

WHEN the German socialist Rodbertus began his studies of the history of industry, it soon became evident that some considerable degree of continuity of development could be found. Forms of industrial organization appeared in various places which <sup>Beginnings of industrial history</sup> could be arranged in logical sequence; beginning with simple forms and passing with minute gradations to the highly complex forms of modern industrial society. The socialists were profoundly interested in the non-capitalistic forms of organization and in the slow emergence of distinct classes of capitalists and wage-earners. An economic interpretation of history began to develop which was profoundly influenced by the socialists though not confined to them. Many of the features of industrial history that appealed to them were the obvious superficial generalizations that would appeal to any casual investigator. The logical progression of these forms of industrial organization made the schemes particularly attractive to persons with theoretical interests. Generalizations have thus become current in economic writing that are largely due to socialistic writers; they represent, however, a superficial interpretation of history that possesses all the attractions of a plausible and simple account. The views are not obviously distorted by socialistic doctrine, but they are the basis of some unfortunate conclusions and they are so misleading that they cannot serve as a guide to further critical study of industrial problems.

The course of industrial history was sketched by these

writers somewhat as follows. In Greece and Rome, industrial development was dominated by slavery and confined to the household. Some large-scale production was made possible by the aggregation of considerable numbers of slaves in the patriarchal household, but even in such cases the industrial establishment was merely a part of the household. Little material equipment was used. Production was directly dependent upon labor. The power of the director of industrial enterprise was derived from his ownership of men. This system disappeared after the fall of Rome, and when industry became important in the towns of the middle ages the free artisan was the basis of the development. The artisan was economically independent and the strength of his material position made possible the successful struggle for political privileges and freedom that marks the rise of the Third Estate. This period of industrial freedom was tenderly idealized by the socialists, and, by one of those strange paradoxes, the middle ages, which were stigmatized in agrarian history as a period of hideous oppression, were characterized as the golden age of industrial development. The artisan was a skilled master of his craft, possessed of sufficient freedom of expression to give full scope to that "instinct of workmanship" that makes work a pleasure. He owned his material equipment and sold his product directly to the consumer. There were no capitalists to exploit workman or consumer; no employers, no middlemen.

The development of the trader created an opportunity for the capitalist. The formation of a mercantile class soon resulted in the subordination of the artisan to the merchant; the merchant supplied the raw materials, employed the artisan to perform the skilled craft-work, and sold the product to the consumer. Distinctions thus arose between the workers and the directors of industrial enterprise. The establishment of the factory system completed the transition from the non-capitalistic to the capitalistic system and reduced the artisan to the status of the modern wage-earner, without proprietary rights

The socialistic  
interpretation

The merchant  
becomes a capi-  
talist employer

in the industrial process and without any vital economic freedom. The attitude of the socialists is adequately conveyed by the phrase "wage slavery" so frequently used by them.

This interpretation of industrial history is based on half-truths: there is an undue sharpening of many antitheses, and many details are excluded that are fundamental. These weaknesses from the point of view of critical scholarship have been a source <sup>Superficiality of the socialistic view</sup> of strength in propaganda. The socialistic interpretation is not only easy to understand; it is the only interpretation that is easy to understand. The Greeks had an old saying, "Hard is the good"; hard also is devotion to truth. [It is notably difficult to secure any adequate approximation to the whole truth. Merely because of its simplicity, this interpretation, in the main socialistic in origin and tenor, has gained wide currency in economic literature until its shortcomings are overcome by mere force of iteration. Bücher's writings, in particular, have given wide currency to the generalizations that originated with Rodbertus, and the brilliant descriptions of Bücher's *Industrial Evolution* have apparently established them in the scientific literature of the subject. The destructive criticism of Edouard Meyer and other historians of antiquity has made little impression, though the interpretation of Bücher has been shown to be palpably wrong. The extraordinary vitality of these erroneous interpretations thus creates critical problems that cannot be avoided even in a general sketch of industrial history.]

## II. THE TYPICAL FORMS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION

In the description of industrial growth there are two distinct problems, which are significantly related, though by no means identical. There is need of careful description of the forms of industrial organization which succeed each other. There is need also of study of the conditions that produce this progression from the simpler to the more complex forms. It is peculiarly unfortunate to assume that the main task is completed when certain forms have been arranged in a logical sequence.

The general designations of the typical forms need not be modified; the following forms can be distinguished: household industry, wage-work, craft-work, the putting-out system, the factory system. Many refinements, however, should be added to the characterization of these types.

The simplest of these types is household industry, or more specifically undiversified household industry. This stage of industrial development precedes any specialization of industry into crafts. Logically, in the pure type, each household would provide for its own industrial wants. No products would be exchanged in such a society. Productive effort would be directed solely to the satisfaction of the wants of the household. The logical requirements of the definition of this most primitive industrial form make it somewhat unreal. There is some truth in the implication that primitive peoples engage in few activities that are not designed to satisfy their personal wants. There is no elaborate division of labor and no skilled industrial craftsmanship. At the same time one must guard against extremes. Among the most primitive peoples this complete self-sufficiency is qualified in a variety of ways, which are of great significance in indicating the process of transition to a more elaborate ordering of society.

Mr. Hilton-Simpson, in writing of the peoples of the Kasai, says of one of the tribes of negroes living in the plains south of the great Congo forest:

The chief of the second village of Makasu appeared by no means anxious for us to leave at once, so we willingly settled down to spend a few days in his village, where we could enjoy a splendid opportunity of studying the daily life of a people among whom European influence has not yet begun to be felt. Every village between the Loange and the Kasai appears to be entirely self-supporting; every man manufactures his own garments, weaving the cloth from palm fiber in the same way as do the Bushongo; accompanied by his dogs, he participates in hunting expeditions, supplying his family with meat from his share of the game, and the Bashilele hunters are far superior to their kinsmen around the Mushenge; he makes his own bows, bowstrings, and



the shafts for his arrows, while he forms and decorates with carving the cups from which he drinks his palm wine; his wives cultivate sufficient land to supply the family needs with cassava; his children tend his chickens and goats. In fact the only things which a man must buy, being unable to make them for himself, are iron objects, such as arrow- and spear-heads, knives and bracelets, all of which are the work of the village blacksmith, who is paid for them in meat, fowls, foodstuffs, or palm cloth.<sup>1</sup>

This village blacksmith seems to be only an exception, something that can be neglected in generalization, and yet if one makes comparison of the relative significance of this iron work to other industrial work actually performed, it will readily appear that the proportion of industrial need actually satisfied by this village smith was far from being inconsiderable. It is quite true that these natives provided largely for their own wants, but it is no less true that we find in their village life the beginnings of specialized craft-work. Most of the industrial field was dominated by household industry of the purest type, but in the metal trades we find craftsmen and the beginnings of diversified industry. Any European would inevitably be primarily impressed by the relative self-sufficiency of the villagers, but that is not the only important conclusion to be drawn from a study of their village life. In studying industrial history it is necessary to recognize that no one form of organization really dominates social life at any particular period.

Among the bushmen of Australia somewhat different qualifications of self-sufficiency appear. The making of boomerangs and other implements involved some degree of skill. The older men of the tribe naturally possessed more skill than the younger men in this carving and wood-working; the old men were likewise less fitted to endure the hardships of long expeditions. A variety of wares, — yellow ochre for body painting, whetstones, and a narcotic herb, — were usually obtained by tribal expeditions which involved much danger and hardship. A ceremonial friendship could be estab-

The household  
not entirely  
self-sufficient

<sup>1</sup> Hilton-Simpson, M. W.: *Land and Peoples of the Kasai* (London, 1911), 331.

lished between two men by virtue of which the older man would produce certain manufactured products to exchange for the products of the expedition. There was thus some division of labor among the men of the tribe, though it was not as marked as the division of labor among the metal-using tribes of Central Africa.

A more important qualification of the self-sufficiency of the primitive industrial household appears in the fairly considerable exchanges that take place at times between different tribes. The extent of this intertribal trade among primitive peoples seems to depend more upon certain external circumstances than upon the grade of culture. Peoples living on waterways of various kinds do more trading than inland peoples like the Australian bushmen. A striking instance of the importance of intertribal trade among genuinely primitive people is afforded by conditions in British New Guinea. These people represent a low grade of culture, and, at the time the observations were made, had been scarcely affected by European influences. There are many tribes of natives inhabiting the small islands at the southerly tip of New Guinea, and various tribes scattered at intervals along the coast of New Guinea. Among these tribes there are marked specializations. Some tribes made quantities of pottery for exchanges with other tribes; others made stone axes for actual or ceremonial use. One island tribe specialized in dugout canoes. These products circulated throughout an extensive area, and there can be no doubt of the extent of the trade or of the deliberate character of the production of these various wares for the general market.

Curiously enough there was some specialization between industrial products and foodstuffs. Some portions of the trading area raised pigs and yams with which to buy shell jewelry and pottery. Certain areas in the Gulf of Papua produced large quantities of sago which were exchanged for shell jewelry and pottery. This trade was carried on annually, and sufficient sago was brought back by the pottery-making villages to insure them an abundance of food for the rest of the season. As much

Primitive trade  
considerable

Geographical  
division of  
labor

as two or three hundred tons of sago might be brought back by the annual expedition. This specialization of industrial work is possible without any genuine development of crafts; the industries are pursued locally because the raw materials are not generally available, no special skill is displayed in the product. Each household of each village would be engaged in the local specialty, and at times the form of the trade indicated that each household of one village traded with a household of the other village. It is thus thoroughly justifiable to distinguish a period of industrial development that precedes the appearance of specialized crafts, but it is not wholly sound to describe such a primitive society in terms of unqualified self-sufficiency. There was some trade even in the most primitive times.

The importance of trade under such conditions can best be appreciated if we think of frontier conditions that are roughly familiar to us all. In many frontier communities there is no diversified industry. The frontier household

The crude textiles used are produced at home, and, to the casual traveler, it may seem that each household is really self-sufficient. Such backwoods communities, however, may be absolutely dependent upon distant markets for their tools and firearms, and perhaps for a wider range of commodities. The settlement is perhaps engaged in some extractive industry or in fur-hunting, all with reference to the demand of the distant market. In truth, the outlying hamlet which seems so independent is really as much a part of the entire industrial community as the metropolitan city.

Even when qualifications are admitted, it is difficult to find characteristic illustrations of this undiversified household industry, and it would seem that industry be- The crafts developed early comes specialized into the various handicrafts at a very early cultural stage. The evidence of early culture collected by anthropologists discloses primitive peoples which are for the most part possessed of some craft-skill. Only among the most backward of these undeveloped races do we find the degree of self-sufficiency that coincides with this notion of the pure household industry. The peoples that

emerge into the field of knowledge at the dawn of history had likewise acquired some craft-skill. Not all the crafts that ultimately arise were to be found in these societies. The process of craft specialization is gradual; industrial pursuits are withdrawn from the household one by one, and in these early periods of history the number of occupations carried on by craftsmen of the town or village is small. The earlier writers have been disposed to characterize such social conditions in terms of the self-sufficiency that was being nibbled away; the entire truth of the situation would seem to be better expressed by describing such conditions in terms of the progression towards a new ordering of social life. In this sense the outstanding feature of early economic life is the rise of the handicrafts.

Rodbertus and Bücher have endeavored to give an extended meaning to the conception of household industry.

Industrial  
slaves

They recognize a secondary form in which the natural monogamic family is enlarged by the addition of slaves. It is beyond doubt that large numbers were used as an industrial force by the heads of many households in the ancient world. It was possible even to develop production on a considerable scale, and we know of numbers of establishments in the various trades that must have presented the superficial aspects of small factories. Assuming that most of the operatives in such establishments were slaves, Rodbertus and Bücher did not hesitate to classify them as industrial households.

Beloch, Meyer, and other historians of antiquity have shown that the number of slaves was seriously overestimated

Importance of  
slavery in  
antiquity

by Rodbertus and Bücher. The free artisan was a larger factor in industrial life than was at first supposed. It is therefore difficult to form an exact notion of the relations between masters and workmen in the shops and establishments of the ancient world. There were some slave establishments, but there were many enterprises that relied upon free labor, and on the whole it would seem better to admit the presence of small factories than to attempt to obscure the existence of some

large-scale production by an adroit definition of terms. The classification of the socialists is indefensible also in respect to the purpose of this production. They are constrained to affirm that the operations of the household were designed to meet the needs of the household as <sup>Production for a market</sup> distinct from being production for the market. Now it is, of course, true that the household of classical antiquity was more largely self-centered than the modern household, but it is not true that these great slave establishments were concerned with producing goods for consumption on the estate. Pottery, metals, and textiles of the higher grade were all widely distributed throughout the ancient world, and this trade was no mere incidental feature of Græco-Roman industrial life. The production of the craftsmen of the ancient world was undertaken with reference to markets, and in no small measure for distant markets. It is therefore doubly misleading to characterize the industrial forms of classical antiquity as household industry. Occupations were rapidly becoming distinct crafts and thus being withdrawn from the sphere of undiversified household work. These changes were largely a result of the gradual expansion of commerce in the Mediterranean world. None of the implications of the simplest industrial category correspond to conditions in the ancient world.

The notion of a craft occupation may present some little difficulty because among primitive peoples it is not uncommon to find industries practiced by the entire population of certain localities. Such speciali- <sup>Craft-industry</sup> zation represents progress toward craft-work, but it would seem wise to consider such diversification a preliminary stage in the general division of labor. Similarly the division of labor between men and women must be regarded as antecedent to the development of genuine crafts. The development of specialized craft-skill is clearly evident only in cases of specialization in particular localities; in its lowest form this specialization appears in the village blacksmith or other such artisan charged with the performance of all the work of that character done in the village. Such artisans were

common in the Greek villages at an early period; they were thought of as servants or slaves of the entire village. The rise of the crafts is soon indicated, however, by the existence of some considerable number of independent crafts in particular towns and villages. The list of recognized crafts is thus evidence that industry has reached the craft stage and also the basis for detailed study of the gradual diversification of industry that is the chief feature of the history of the earlier portion of the handicraft period. It is of moment to ascer-

The crafts  
emerged slowly

tain the probable order of emergence of the crafts, for some of the misconceptions of early industrial history are due to the assumption that the relative importance of the different crafts and occupations has always been the same. References in classical literature to the spinning and weaving done by the women in the household convey the impression that nearly everything of importance was done in the house. The significance of the village blacksmith is lost on the casual reader because the smith work does not seem as important as the textile work, but it is not to be assumed that the crafts emerge from the household in the order of the intrinsic importance of the various occupations.

The older writers have distinguished two types of craft-workers: wage-workers and craft-workers. The distinction

Wage-work and  
craft-work

turns upon the mode of payment for the work. If the raw material is owned by the consumer, the craftsman is really employed by him to perform a certain amount of skilled labor for a wage. The craftsman does not make any article to be sold in the market; he merely sells his services. He is a wage-earner, though there is no specialized employer. If the raw material is owned by the craftsman, he must produce wares to be sold in the market, and he can secure a return for his labor only through the price of the finished product.

Logically these forms may be arranged in sequence; wage-work may be regarded as a lower form of industry than craft work, but there is no historical justification for this logical assumption that these forms represent different stages in development. They are

are not differ-  
ent stages in  
development

alternative forms that emerge in different crafts. Rarely, if ever, could one expect to find a craft which was at first practiced according to the form of wage-work and then at a later date according to the form of craft-work. It will be observed that some crafts are of such a nature that they can be most effectively remunerated by a wage payment. The building trades, for instance, are primarily concerned with the performance of certain skilled services for the benefit of a consumer. The raw materials can be most readily furnished by the consumer, unless society is sufficiently diversified to maintain capitalist contractors. In the portions of Europe which were well supplied with building stone, the material used was characteristically gotten out in the immediate locality, usually on land belonging to the person for whose benefit the building was to be erected. The stonemasons employed would be expected to get out their stone. If some general quarry were used, the stone would probably be procured by the consumer. The raw materials of other crafts were such that they could most suitably be procured by the craftsman himself. The textile workers were likely to secure their own raw materials. A few crafts might well work according to both systems. The candle-makers, for instance, might produce candles for a general market by making up raw materials purchased by them. They might also go out to some house or establishment to work up into candles a stock of grease that had been accumulated there. At Paris, the candle-makers were subjected to specific regulations as to the quality of grease they might use when manufacturing for the general market, though they were allowed to make up any kind of grease for a particular individual if the work was done on his premises. It would seem that the distinction between these different forms of payment for craft service is not of great importance.

There are two distinct stages in the development of the crafts which are of primary importance. In the earlier stages of industrial specialization, the crafts emerge as occupations which produce a finished product, or at least a salable product. Cloth,

Stages in the  
growth of  
craft-industry



for instance, can be used without being bleached or dyed, and it is fairly certain that "grey" cloth was used extensively in the ancient and medieval periods. It may be that a weaver would sell the grey cloth to a prospective consumer, and thus he would not strictly speaking deal in a finished product. We cannot be sure whether weavers preceded dyers or dyers preceded weavers as persons exercising distinct crafts. It would seem likely, however, that some persons would find a regular and distinct occupation in bleaching and dyeing crude home-spuns appreciably before weaving became a specialized occupation. The dyers took the product of undiversified household industry and gave the cloth a finish that made it substantially a new product. Such a craft would represent more or less exactly the notions commonly held of craft-industry. A single craft, represented always by a particular workman, stands between the "raw product" and the consumer. There is no middleman, no intermediate processes of production and sale.

Such a simple situation cannot long persist; the development of craft differentiation tends to disintegrate the process of production into its essential stages, and finally each phase of the transformation of the primary raw material becomes the basis of a separate craft. Thus in the textile trades, we ultimately find distinct crafts of wool-combers, weavers, fullers, dyers, and drapers. Spinning never became a craft-operation in the legitimate sense of the word; it was a subsidiary employment of women and children that required no specialized skill. The production of textiles thus came to be the work of a group of crafts, so that some of the workers never came in contact with the consumer. The direct contact with the consumer that is so strongly emphasized in descriptions of craft-industry does not apply to the later stages of craft-development. The disintegration of the process of production required at least successive sales of partly finished goods. Combers might sell combed wool to weavers, weavers would sell grey cloth to fullers or dyers, fullers and dyers would sell finished cloth to the drapers who undertook to sell the cloth in the distant market that



was usually contemplated. A considerable division of labor might thus develop without breaking down the independence of the craftsmen. In this second period of craft-diversification each craft was a link in a chain of correlated crafts. Sufficient differentiation to give rise to many of these phenomena undoubtedly existed at a relatively early period in the development of craft-industry. The notion of direct contact between producer and consumer cannot be regarded as characteristic of the chief period of craft-industry. The simplicity of industrial life during the craft period, too, has been seriously exaggerated. The multiplicity of special crafts gave rise at an early date to all these loose coördinations of groups of crafts that are so hard for us to appreciate.

The recognition of this second stage of craft-development is particularly important because it furnishes the basis for the beginnings of capitalistic control of industry.

The formation of a considerable group of crafts in a single industry brought with it certain technical advantages from specialization of skill, but there were certain economic disadvantages as long as the crafts remained entirely independent. The successive buying and selling of partly finished products were sheer waste of energy. There was also no possibility of exercising any supervision over the process of production. These disadvantages could be overcome if some one bought the primary raw material at the outset and then hired the various craftsmen to perform their craft-work for wages. A capitalist employer of this type was necessary to prevent specialization from degenerating into disorder. The tendency toward disintegration was thus offset by a tendency towards integration: there was disintegration in the technique of production followed speedily by integration of control.

The general industrial system by which this control was exercised passes under a great variety of names. It has been called the "domestic system," because the workmen are generally able to pursue their craft in their homes. This term presents an antithesis to the factory system, but it fails to suggest any distinction between this form and the craft sys-

Beginning of  
capitalistic  
control

tem. Until the factory appeared the household was the scene of nearly all industrial labor; the fact that the work was done at home is thus of no distinctive significance. The phrase "commission system" has also been used, but such a term suggests a relation between principle and agent that is meaningless in this particular phase of industrial history. The term "putting-out system" is neither euphonic nor elegant, but it has the merit of describing the salient characteristics of this type of industrial organization, and it suggests the features that distinguish this type both from the craft forms that precede it and from the factory system that follows. The employer owns the materials and gives them out to various craft-workers who carry the goods through a process or group of processes. The goods are then returned to the employer, and, if they are not yet finished, they are passed on to other workmen. The employer must needs be a capitalist: he owns the materials during the process of production and advances wages to the craftsmen. At times the employer may own tools or other equipment used in production. Instances occur in the nineteenth century in which the employer owned the cottages used by the workmen; the cottages were prepared for the weavers or other craftsmen and rented completely equipped. Not infrequently part of the work was done in workshops belonging to the capitalist employer and under immediate supervision. This was most commonly the case with reference to some of the finishing processes of the woolen manufacture.

The putting-out system is by nature highly elastic, admitting of many gradations of capitalistic control of the process of production, and corresponding variety in the degree to which the disintegration of industry into separate crafts is remedied by centralized direction. The scale of production, too, might vary within wide limits. Many establishments in the woolen industry organized on this system employed a thousand hands, and though the number of employees was of course somewhat increased by the absence of power machinery the scale of the undertaking was really considerable.

The "putting-out" system

Its advantages and historical importance

The variety of detail possible in this system enables us to appreciate clearly all the phases of the long transition from craft-work to the factory, and the minuteness of the changes affords interesting illustrations of the continuity of industrial development. At no point is there an abrupt transition from the old to the new.

In the main, the putting-out system merely brought a number of workmen under a moderate degree of supervision and direction. The establishment was the loosest possible aggregation of workers. The development of this form does not ordinarily bring with it any increase in the division of labor. It was primarily an antidote for excessive disintegration. In the eighteenth century, however, new tendencies can be perceived in some English industries. Weaving, as practiced by the craftsmen of the old school, comprised three distinct operations or tasks: preparation of the warp; the placing of the warp on the beam of the loom; and the throwing of the shuttle through the warp. The preparation of the warp and the setting-up of the loom required much skill, though neither task required as much time as the throwing of the shuttle. Concentration of skilled workmen on the preparatory tasks would thus make it possible to delegate the laborious work with the shuttle to inferior workmen, or even to unskilled beginners. A considerable dilution of skilled workers was thus possible.

These tendencies were not merely local, nor were they confined to a single industry, though we know more about the woolen industry. These beginnings of a horizontal division of labor, the splitting-up of the old crafts into their component processes are the first evidences of a transition to a new system of organization in which the workmen were to be more than mere aggregations of units. The increased subdivision of processes of production made it more necessary than in the past to work out carefully the correlation between the various groups of workmen. More supervision became necessary because the workman was not always a master of his craft. The employer thus became by force of circumstance a disciplinarian, interested in every

detail of the process of production. The advantages to be secured through the organization of team-play among the workmen and through more careful study of the pace of the entire productive process could become really significant only through an increase of discipline and drilling that would be impossible as long as the workers remained in their homes. The concentration of the whole body of employees was indispensable: properly speaking it was not an end in itself, but merely a means to an end. It is the most notable visible difference between the establishment organized under the putting-out system and the factory, but it is not in fact the essential feature of the factory system. The gathering together of operatives in one place would not properly make a factory any more than the collection of a large body of men makes an army. Until there is some plan for the increased coördination of the workmen, some increase in the division of labor, and new disciplinary measures to give effect to the closer ordering of the productive process, there is no real advantage in collecting the operatives into a single workshop.

There were advantages in this new organization that were sufficiently great to induce the proprietor of the establishment to adopt the new system, without assuming any change in the technical equipment of industry. The change to the factory system could take place before the introduction of machinery, as far as the employer was concerned. This industrial transformation, however, is distinct from all the phases of development that precede it in being bitterly opposed by the workmen. They did not like the rigid discipline of the new régime; the liberty of the craft-work in their homes was not significantly qualified by the supervision exercised by the capitalist employer, and they were loath to give up their personal liberty. The establishment of the factory system was undoubtedly delayed by the unwillingness of the workmen to accept the conditions of employment that it imposed, and the introduction of the new system thus turned upon the pressure of competition between the old equipment and the power machinery that

Rise of the  
factory

The hostility of  
the workmen

began to affect industry at the close of the eighteenth century. The factory that came into being in the early nineteenth century thus differed from the putting-out system in three respects: the greater measure of coördination in the process of production; the massing of the operatives in one establishment; the introduction of machinery.

Strict classification of industrial forms thus leads to a number of divergences from popular and legal usage. The "workshops" of English statutes and the "sweat-shops" that are currently distinguished from "factories" would probably fall within the meaning of the term "factory," as defined above. The legal definition of the factory inadequate It is commonly recognized that the distinction between "factories" and "workshops" is wholly arbitrary and unfortunate. An industrial establishment does not change its character significantly by reason of employing a fiftieth hand; if numbers can possess any importance from the standpoint of classification they are most likely to mean something when the establishments are small. The numbers five and six used in German and French industrial statistics are probably connected with real differences in the character of the establishment, but once the size of the establishment has grown beyond such narrow limits further classification by numbers can have no functional significance. The attempt to distinguish workshops as places in which no power machinery was used was perhaps more significant, but no more justifiable on scientific grounds. These distinctions have proved to have been unwise from the administrative point of view. There were no sufficient grounds for subjecting such establishments to different restrictions.

The sweat-shop presents a more difficult problem of classification, and it may seem extravagant to propose to classify the majority of sweat-shops as factories; the conclusion is, however, irresistible. Sweat-shops The sweat-shop is the abode of the proprietor in most cases, but many of the employees live elsewhere. Furthermore, the work is done under supervision of a taskmaster; the employees constitute a team of workers of various degrees of skill engaged in the

series of tasks necessary to complete some industrial operation; there is an elaborate division of labor and definite pace for the work. The establishment represents a type of factory in which the economic advantages are derived from this severe driving of the laborers as a team. The fact that the proprietor of the sweat-shop contracts to do certain work for another business man is of indifference in classifying the establishment. The work of that business man is "put-out" in a sense, but the manner of the putting-out is entirely different from the delegation of work in the putting-out system. When the capitalist employer of the early days gave out work he was dealing with people who were to perform the work in their homes at their own convenience; the fact that they did the work most literally at their convenience was one of the most serious difficulties the employer had to contend with. He could never be sure of getting work out on time. The essential feature of the putting-out system is this absence of any disciplinary power; the capitalist was an employer of labor, but he was not a boss.

The position of the sweat-shop is not happily defined in terms of the putting-out of work: the work that is given out is comparable to work let out by firms that do not care to make all their accessories; it represents a contract between establishments rather than a contract between a capitalist employer and a craftsman living in his own home. The sweat-shop can thus be compared to the manufacturing firm that makes some small specialty, not itself of use to consumers but fundamental to many manufacturers. It is a small factory, representing the system at its worst. It is a "morbid survival," to use Hobson's phrase; but it is not a survival from any remote past. We see in this form the early type of the factory without machinery, exempt from all regulation.

### III. COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

It will be observed that the development of the various industrial forms is merely an outcome of the progressive division of labor. Each form is related to particular degrees

of industrial specialization. The forms are not in themselves good or bad; they are adaptations to the circumstances created by the gradual specialization of work. <sup>Industrial specialization</sup> The central fact is not the series of successive industrial forms, but the division of labor, ever more and more elaborately articulated. The seeming continuity of industrial development is wholly due to this dominant fact. The complexities of the actual chronology of industrial history are all lost to view because of the compelling logical movement of this progressive division of labor with its related industrial forms. It is desirable, however, to keep these complexities of actual chronology clearly in mind, for they constitute the main problem of industrial history.

The advantages of the division of labor are so widely realized that it is not necessary to comment on the cause or the variety of forms in which they appear. But it would seem that men were slow to appreciate the economic advantages of this specialization of effort. Why has the development of industrial forms been so slow? Why do the highly specialized types of industrial society emerge so late? The general answer to these fundamental questions is furnished by the axiom of Adam Smith: the extent of the market defines the profitable limits of the division of labor. The <sup>limited by the market</sup> village blacksmith must needs be somewhat of a Jack-of-all-Trades because no one of his activities would, in that village, afford him a livelihood. He must needs be a worker in iron, a wagon-maker, a joiner, and not infrequently he used to be called upon as a dentist. The handloom weaver was also a gardener, and at harvest time he might hire out as a general farm laborer.

The principle of Adam Smith is well known, but there is frequent tendency to forget that the market for industrial products is no simple matter. The market <sup>Territorial and social limitations</sup> is subject to social and territorial limitations. It may consist of a clientele spread through a wide area, but confined to a single class, or again it may consist of all classes of persons living within a relatively circumscribed area. The limitations of the market from the terri-



torial point of view have always been keenly felt, the social limitations of the market have not been as generally perceived, though they are of special importance in connection with industrial history. In the middle ages, markets for industrial products were small by reason of social rather than territorial limitations. It was easier to sell the high-grade broadcloth of England in the Near East or in the East Indies than to sell such goods to the peasants or shopkeepers of the county. Until the Industrial Revolution it was easier to extend the market for manufactures by selling through a wider area than to increase the market by offering the goods to the poorer classes of the community.

The foreign or distant market has thus played a more prominent part in industrial history than the domestic market. Some have been disposed to believe that difficulties of transportation prevented the sale of goods over large areas until a fairly recent period, but this is a serious error. Transportation was slow, and the volume of goods handled was small in comparison with modern traffic; but such comparisons are misleading. Manufactured commodities were sent great distances both in classical and medieval days, and, when water transport was available, bulky commodities like grain and oil could profitably be shipped. The limitations of the market were an outcome of the inequalities of the distribution of wealth which placed the purchasing power of the community primarily in the hands of the landed aristocracy, so that the market for many industrial products was the luxurious demand of the wealthy. Much industry was therefore concerned with a class that was concentrated in the larger towns during the Græco-Roman period, though the towns were themselves scattered throughout the Mediterranean world. In the middle ages the aristocracy was even more widely diffused through an area that had been enlarged by the development of northern Europe.

The commodities used by the common people were not all produced in the home either in classical or in medieval times; nevertheless, these needs were not sufficiently consid-



erable to afford a basis for the development of highly specialized industry. Such wants could be gratified by a few local craftsmen. There was a notable interchange of products between artisans and small farmers. The urban craftsman became dependent upon the foodstuffs produced by the small farmers and among these lower classes a genuine money economy sprang up at a relatively early date. The artisans sold their goods or services for money to the aristocrats or to the farmers of the neighborhood; with money they purchased their supplies in the market. It is the life of these humbler classes in society that creates the appearance of intense local self-sufficiency which many writers declare to be characteristic of the economic life of these early periods. The cosmopolitanism in the life of the upper classes is quite as characteristic, however, and the difference between modern life and the life of these remote periods really lies in the strange dualism of social organization in ancient and medieval times; certain aspects of society being dominated by the narrowest local influences, other aspects less definitely centralized than at the present time.

The insistence upon local self-sufficiency is thus justifiable in a measure, but it must not be presented as the whole truth of the matter, and with reference to industrial history it is peculiarly disastrous to neglect the cosmopolitan life of the upper classes, for such influences were all-important in determining the more highly specialized industrial developments.

Not until the Industrial Revolution does the intensive exploitation of the needs of all classes in the community become the dominant fact in industrial specialization. When methods of production were primarily dependent upon hand work, the high costs and tendency to emphasize distinctiveness of product inevitably restricted the sale to the wealthy. Large-scale production with a mechanical technique made it possible to offer to all wares that had formerly been the prerogative of the wealthy. Consumption became more standardized; the

Local trade

Late development of standardized consumption

manufacturer realized that it was more profitable to sell relatively cheap wares to the entire community than to sell distinctive products to persons of great wealth.

The expansion of the market for industrial products has thus been a highly complex development; sometimes social, sometimes territorial. German writers have made much use of the phrase "world market" in writing of recent developments, implying and frequently declaring that the "market" was less broad in the earlier periods. All highly developed industrial districts have been dependent upon a world market, in the territorial sense of the word. There has always been a world market, and at the same time the territorial extent of the market has been periodically enlarged — the world has grown larger. There is a tendency to forget the significance of the terminology established in geography. We are all familiar with phrases like "the Homeric World," "the World of Herodotus," "the Ptolemaic World," and yet we forget that the growth of geographical knowledge is closely related to the expansion of commerce. In the study of industrial history these various phases in the territorial expansion of the Western world are absolutely vital.

The slow growth of industry prior to the ninth century B.C. was largely conditioned by the narrow limitations of the area of significant social contacts. The rise of the maritime development of the Phœnician and Greek cities resulted in a great extension of the civilized world. The entire eastern end of the Mediterranean began to show evidence of a systematic geographical division of labor. The production of grain, oil, and metals was somewhat specialized as well as the production of industrial products. The multiplication of the crafts in the Greek cities and colonies was a reflection of this extension of Mediterranean commerce. Mediæval industry developed under the influence of a somewhat different complex of commercial factors. The newly acquired importance of northern Europe gave added emphasis to the geographical division of labor: there were climatic differences between the Near East and

northern Europe that did not exist between the countries of the Mediterranean. Export industries became increasingly important in the middle ages because they were essential to the trade between northern Europe and the Near East, or Levant. There was an increase in the dependence upon export trade as well as an increase in the area within the scope of the general commercial system. These conditions afforded medieval industry a broader commercial background, and, although the forms of craft-industry predominated as during the major portion of the classical period, there were significant differences in the number of crafts and in the degree of industrial specialization.

The Industrial Revolution was in part an outcome of the commercial expansion to India and the Spice Islands. New markets were opened up and new wares were introduced into Europe. The inventions were in many cases a deliberate attempt to take advantage of the industrial opportunities created by this commercial growth, although the changes in the metal trades cannot be directly associated with the growth of commerce. With this single exception each great period of industrial change has been closely related to periods of commercial expansion. Industry has developed, therefore, as a result of circumstances affecting the life of the community as a whole and not primarily by reason of any spontaneous tendency confined to the industrial field. The factors that have dominated industrial growth are economic rather than technological. Industry reacts to general social changes, and is seldom an initial cause of change.

Expansion in  
the middle ages

Expansion prior  
to the Indus-  
trial Revolution

## CHAPTER II

### THE RISE OF THE CRAFTS IN ANTIQUITY

#### I

THE beginnings of the records of Western civilization are closely associated with the beginnings of urban life. The rapid growth of our knowledge of the life of prehistoric men should save us from the error of identifying the dawn of history with the beginnings of organized social life, and for that reason we should not be unduly surprised to find revealed, both in Egypt and Mesopotamia, a social structure already far removed from the primitive conditions that can still be studied among the backward races of Australasia and the equatorial forests of Africa. Between these primitive conditions revealed by anthropological research and the social life of the early Egyptians and Sumerians there is a gap which cannot be bridged. Social history does not begin at the beginning of social life, and there is great danger that the institutions of these early societies be misinterpreted because of an unwarranted assumption that they must needs represent in actual forms the conditions that should logically be found at the beginnings of social life. Despite the brilliance of Bücher's work and the keenness of his sense of historical development, evidence is constantly forced upon our attention that he could not free himself from the disposition to describe the dawn of history as if it were the origin of organized social life.

The political arrangements and religious beliefs are so different from our own that the changes seem immeasurably great, — so great that we readily think of the Egyptians and Sumerians as primitive peoples, scarcely civilized. So common was this view a generation ago that the archeological discoveries of recent years have been a real shock to our historical consciousness. The discovery of the Code of Hammurabi, dating from about two thousand years before Christ,

has been the most notable single revelation of this hitherto unknown world, but this is only one of many discoveries, and, although the mass of our knowledge is still small, we can form tentative opinions about the social life of these peoples of the Near East.

The most noteworthy feature of these early records is the unmistakable evidence of developed urban life. The tiny villages of primitive society had long been out-  
 grown, and some significant concentration of <sup>Records and city life</sup> population had taken place. Among the Greeks, this transition to urban life took place within a period which was within the historical era; and the literature and legends of the race constitute a fragmentary and uncertain record which has historical value, though it can hardly be called a historical record. Even among the Greeks we have scarce anything in the nature of a formal record until urban life had become an established feature of their society. When a people has not advanced beyond primitive village life there is little likelihood that it will leave any records. Even in the period following the fall of Rome, when social life was by no means primitive, the decadence of urban life and the predominantly rural character of the settlements of the Teutonic invaders created conditions so unfavorable to the making of records that the term "dark ages" is fairly descriptive. The study of the beginnings of industrial organization is thus profoundly affected by the defects of historical records. When some conscious record is made, the details of daily life appear only by chance, in references that were not designed to describe industrial conditions systematically, so that our knowledge is at best incomplete. According to the caprice of record-making, we begin to learn something of industry in the Western world at a stage that is already far advanced.

The most difficult problems in the early history of industry center around the period of decadence in urban life. There is an interval between the decline of the <sup>The</sup> towns of the Roman Empire and the rise of the "dark ages" mediæval towns which seems to be a real break in the continuity of industrial history. For several centuries there

seems to be a positive regression, and the rise of the towns in the middle ages seems to be without substantial connection with the urban life of the ancient world. The "dark ages," however, were not as complete a break with the past as is frequently assumed. On the other hand, it is an error to presume that the towns of the middle ages are a mere revival of the older urban forms. There were profound differences both in social and in political organization, and these divergences were of great moment with reference to the development of industry and commerce.

The cities of the classical world were, in the main, aristocratic residence cities; there were tradesmen and artisans, but they constituted an inferior class, usually The ancient city deprived of any political rights. Trade was tolerated, its advantages surreptitiously enjoyed, but never recognized as a worthy pursuit for persons of birth. The medieval towns were primarily industrial and commercial. The aristocracy, lay and ecclesiastical, became definitely identified with the land, and, except for casual visits, ceased to reside in the towns. The townsmen constituted a distinct class, possessing privileges of real significance in all the medieval kingdoms. In many instances they achieved substantial independence. These political differences reflect different relations to the land that are of great economic importance. In the classical world there were agrarian problems, but there was no opposition between urban and rural interests. The class endowed with significant rights was so completely identified with both town and country that no fundamental opposition of interest was conceivable. The aristocrats of the ancient world lived primarily in the city, but drew their revenues from agriculture or mining. Their household consisted of a mass of blood relatives, slaves, and dependents, who divided their time between the town house and the country house. Urban concentration was thus determined more largely by social and political purposes than by economic factors.

The growth of cities in the ancient world was thus somewhat capricious, dependent upon military power quite as



much as upon commercial advantage. At times trade degenerated into an organized system of collecting tribute, ceasing to be in any sense a matter of reciprocal advantage. These military and political aspects of classical civilization appear most clearly in the later history of Rome, notably in the last century of the Republic and under the Empire. Toward the close, the predatory motives underlying this civilization were unblushingly revealed. Rome became a great commercial center, but the movement was almost entirely inward. The flow of goods toward Rome was balanced by the flow of legionaries to the provinces. In all this system of exploitation, Rome was inventing nothing: merely practicing with full knowledge the lessons learned from the other great peoples of the Mediterranean world, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Egyptians. All had contributed something toward the upbuilding of the Empire that revealed the best and the worst that antiquity could produce.

The military  
basis of the  
ancient world

Antiquity produced brilliant cities and notable civilizations; but they lacked foundation. Industrial development was inevitably a part of the premature brilliance of these luxury-loving cultures. The rapid growth of urban centers under the stimulus of social and political factors fostered industry. It is therefore peculiarly unfortunate that Bücher and earlier writers should have attempted to classify the industries of classical antiquity as primitive types, definitely inferior to the medieval types. The peculiar characteristics of classical culture are most clearly revealed in the relation of industry to agriculture and in the predacious exploitation of distant provinces for the benefit of military aristocracies. The great market for industrial products was furnished by the wealthy aristocrats, so that industry was primarily concerned with catering to their wants.

The simplest measure of the intensity of these political forces is afforded by the meager statistics of population. The studies of Beloch give the following results for the fifth century B.C.: Athens, including the Piræus, a total population of about 120,000;

Extent of  
the urban  
movement

Syracuse, 115,000; Corinth, 90,000; Sparta, Argos, Megalopolis, Akragas, Taras, Thebes, Sidon, and Tyre, 40,000 to 50,000 each. The number of slaves is largely a matter of conjecture, but occasional references form the basis of the conventional estimate of one third of the total population, slightly more perhaps in some of the notable industrial cities, slightly less in other cities. These figures represent approximately the position of the Greek cities during the period of their greatest prosperity, and the figures are particularly noteworthy in comparison with Rome, as the purely military elements were less obtrusive in Greece than in other portions of the ancient world. Commercial conditions were more important and in some cases predominant. The importation of food products, which was essential to all the larger cities, was balanced by an industrial export, so that Greek commerce was a pretty genuine exchange of commodities.

Beloch estimates the total population of Rome, for the year 5 B.C., at 850,000 or 875,000. Estimates for the early

Rome at the  
height of her  
power

Empire place the population at about 1,000,000. This concentration was certainly not a result of purely economic forces, and the measures necessary to assure an adequate supply of food speak eloquently of the significance of political factors. Under the early Empire Rome imported between 6,000,000 and 7,500,000 bushels of grain annually, from Egypt, the Crimea, Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa. Much of this importation was definitely a tribute to Rome's military supremacy.

The rise of the medieval towns marks the beginning of a great change in the relative importance of political and economic forces in social life. Despite all the barriers to intercourse there was a great increase in the degree of economic freedom. Industry was free to the extent of being conducted almost exclusively by free artisans, and commerce was free in the sense of being a genuine exchange of goods. The rise of the towns in the middle ages is thus not merely an important episode in the history of political freedom, but also an important chapter in the history of economic freedom. The achievement of political in-

Trade and the  
medieval towns



dependence was made possible by the close identification of the feudal aristocracy with the land. Feudal society thus tended to become divided between the rural interests of the nobility and the urban interests of the Third Estate. Town and country were opposed to each other politically, and were held together by the most casual economic relations.

The modern period is characterized by the development of a close integration between rural and urban life. The city becomes a focal point of all economic forces; Function of the modern city a distributing point for industrial products going to the rural districts and a concentration point for agricultural products and minerals coming from the country. The function of the city becomes purely economic, and its growth correspondingly dependent upon its convenience for commercial and industrial purposes. The modern city serves a large region instead of a mere rural suburb; it possesses a "hinterland" that comprises an organized complex of rural and industrial centers.

There is thus some measure of continuity in the growth of relations between town and country throughout the history of the Western world. In the ancient world the rural districts had no independent organization; they were merely tributary to the towns. In the medieval period town and country were substantially independent; each had its definite place in the feudal order, and, though some contact was maintained, each remained in its own sphere. In the modern period, town and country have become an organic whole with reciprocal functions and interests. The continuity of growth is not at all times clearly apparent, and it is most obscure in the field of industrial history.

No striking differences in industrial forms distinguish classical and medieval industry. The number of crafts varies at different times, and in different places; great Ancient and medieval conditions were comparable changes take place in the relative importance of the various crafts. There are changes in the scale of industrial enterprise; growth also in the markets, from small local and foreign markets which constitute the reliance of a few craftsmen to large foreign markets which

become the basis of great export industries. There is likewise an increase in the number of towns possessing noteworthy industries. Much development during antiquity and the middle ages is concerned with the diffusion of industries and types of organization which emerge at a very early date. The legal status of the artisan and the general social and political position of the class as a whole undergo many changes. In short, the aspect of industrial life that is least influenced by historical changes is the form of organization. There are many variations, but the predominant types, during antiquity and the middle ages, are wage-work and craft-work.

## II. EGYPT \*

The interpretation of Egyptian records presents many difficulties. The pictorial representations on the monuments exhibit considerable numbers of craft operations, even in the early period of the Old Empire, but it is not easy to determine the status of these artisans or their relation to possible employers or customers. Much work was done in the establishments of the royal household, the great landowners, and the temples. It is essential to know whether the workmen employed were substantially slaves permanently attached to the household, or whether they enjoyed some measure of independence, working in part for casual consumers. Our knowledge of the details of craft processes is more accurate than our knowledge of the forms of industrial organization. We must needs depend upon inferences for most of our opinions about the civil status of artisans and the manner of the remuneration.

The most important single source of information is a description of the disadvantages of all forms of manual labor, written by a scribe of the Twelfth Dynasty (2000-1788 B.C.) in order to encourage young men to undergo the arduous preparation required by the profession.<sup>1</sup> There is thus an

<sup>1</sup> The document is translated entire by G. Maspero in his work *Du Genre Epistolaire chez les Egyptiens de l'Epoque Pharaonique* (Paris, 1872), 48-73. Considerable portions are translated into English in his *Dawn of Civilization* (New York, 1894), I, 311-14. The texts are slightly different. The translation given here is in part original.

evident implication that a young man of the middle class might at his own pleasure adopt any one of these various modes of gaining a livelihood. Not all the crafts of which pictorial representation exists are mentioned in the scribe's enumeration, so that it may be a presentation of the careers open to a young man of the middle class:

I have seen violence . . . therefore apply your heart to letters . . . I have beheld those who are engaged in manual work . . . and, in truth, there is no occupation above that of letters . . . The crafts in it is the most important of all the crafts. It is not a <sup>early Egypt</sup> vain thing . . . he who applies himself to this profession from his youth up, gains honor. . . . He is sent on missions. He who does not take up this profession will be clad in sackcloth.

I have never seen a blacksmith on an embassy, nor a smelter sent on a mission, but I have seen the smith at his work — at the mouth of the furnace of his forge — his fingers as rugged as the hide of a crocodile, and stinking more than fish spawn.

Has the worker with metals more leisure than the man with the hoe? . . . His field is the block of wood under his hand, his tools are of metal. . . . At night the laborer is free, the artisan's hands are still busy — for at night he works with his torch.

The stone-cutter who seeks his living by working in all kinds of durable stones . . . when at last he has earned something and his two arms are worn out, he stops. But if at sunrise he remains sitting, his legs are tied to his back.<sup>1</sup>

The barber who shaves until the evening . . . only when he is eating can he lower his arm. . . . He runs from house to house seeking custom; He wears out his arms to fill his belly, for like the bee he eats in proportion to his toil.

I will tell you of the mason. Sickness threatens him continually for he is exposed to all the winds — while the bunch of lotus flowers (which is fixed) on the (completed) houses is still far out of his reach. I direct his arms in the work. His clothes are in disorder. . . . (He consumes himself, for he has no other bread than his fingers.) (*sic!*) He washes only once a day. He must humble himself in order to please.

The weaver within doors is worse off there than a woman; squatting, his knees against his chest, he gets no breath of fresh air. If he slackens work for as much as a day he is bound like the lotus in the swamp, and it is by giving bread to the doorkeeper that he sees a ray of light.

The armorer is put to great trouble when he sets out for distant

<sup>1</sup> Allusion to a common mode of punishment.

lands, he must pay much for his pack mules. He must pay much for their keep while on the road. Scarcely does he reach home once more than he must leave again.

The messenger leaving for distant lands wills his property to his children, for he fears wild beasts and the Asiatics. And what happens when he is once again in Egypt? Scarcely does he reach home once more than he must leave again. If he goes, his sorrow is a burden to him, and all his happiness is gone.

The dyer's fingers reek, and the smell is like rotten fish. His eyes are heavy with fatigue, and his hand does not stop. He passes his time cutting up rags. . . . He has a hatred of garments.

The shoemaker is very unfortunate. He begs ceaselessly. His health is the health of spoiled fish. He gnaws his leather.

The laundry-man washing by the riverside is a neighbor of the crocodile. While he beats the dirt out in the water his hand does not stop. It is forsooth no easy trade that I describe to you, no craft agreeable above all others. His food is laid with his clothes, and no part of his body is clean. He is as wretched as a woman. When I see him in his misery I bewail his lot, for he passes his time with his beating stick in his hand. When I bring him clothes to be washed, he is told, "If you are slow in bringing them back, you will be slapped on both cheeks."

The baker makes dough, and subjects the loaves to the fire; while his head is inside the oven, his son holds him by the legs: if he slips from the hands of his son, he falls into the flames.

Other workmen are described in the enumeration, such as the boatman, the husbandman, the market-gardener, the farmer, the fowler, and the fisherman. These, however, are not industrial pursuits, though they are an indication of the degree of the division of labor that is associated with the rise of crafts in industry. When the list of crafts is completed from other references, the number and character of the crafts of the period would bear comparison with conditions in the smaller towns of the early middle ages. Some of these craftsmen seem to be engaged in wage-work, rendering services for remuneration of some sort: the barber, the mason, the stone-cutter, the laundry-man, the messenger, and the like. Others make articles for a market.

Trade among  
artisans

There is a grave relief of the Fifth Dynasty,<sup>1</sup> depicting a market scene which shows various craftsmen

<sup>1</sup> The Sakkara relief; see Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*, I, 322-23.

disposing of their wares among themselves and to the fellows who have come in from the suburbs with garden produce, game, and fish. The trade is by barter. The craftsmen indicated are: glassbead-makers, makers of fans and blowers for fires, shobemakers, metal-workers (a man with fish-hooks), and a perfumer. Some craftsmen at least devoted time to the preparation of wares for sale to their fellows and the country people. In the daily life of the humbler citizens, at least, the essential features of pure craft-work are clearly evident at the dawn of Egyptian history.

Artisans were employed in three ways: on the estates of some great landlord, royal or noble; in the workshops of the temples; and on their own account. The royal household derived most of its income from services and tools rendered as a tax or tribute by the various artisans and agriculturalists. <sup>The position of the artisan</sup> The pictures of workmen bringing goods to the royal storehouses, thus, should not be interpreted as evidence that the workmen were permanently attached to the household. Some considerable portion of the output would be required by the King, but much of their time was at their own disposal. The work done for the temples might be arranged for in a variety of ways; it is conceivable that some artisans should be permanently attached to the service of the temple, and slaves were, of course, employed. Much of the work, however, was probably done by artisans hired for the occasion by those directing the work of the temple. The tomb of Rekhmire (Eighteenth Dynasty) depicts the operations of large numbers of craftsmen employed on work for the temple. Workers in leather, wood, stone, gold, silver, and copper are represented. The brickmakers in the building scenes are definitely stated to be captives; the other craftsmen are apparently freemen. There are two scenes suggesting payment: in one scene the workmen with their wives and children file by the officials at the storehouse and receive grain, oil, and clothing; in the other scene there are scribes and overseers for each group of workmen, and with each group of supervisors there is one man with a money bag. There is



therefore some slight reason to assume that the workmen were paid a portion of their wages in money, though the man with the purse may be a purely symbolic figure. That the workmen received some portion of their wages in kind is altogether probable, but such use was made of gold and copper rings as to make some issue of currency equally probable.

The list of crafts in early Egypt is interesting because it is evident that the crafts do not appear in the order of their importance in the field of consumption. The textile crafts are first represented by the dyers. Weavers are mentioned in the enumeration of the scribe, but it is generally held that weaving remained the work of women in the households until the Twentieth Dynasty. The word translated "weaver" in the manuscript of the scribe is doubtful and it seems likely that it was at least uncommon to find a man whose sole occupation was weaving.

### III. MESOPOTAMIA

The increase of our knowledge of the history of Mesopotamia in the early pre-Christian era is still proceeding so rapidly that no account of political or social life can be more than tentative. The process of deciphering the clay tablets, also, presents difficulties that are of special moment in the study of industrial development. The designations of various kinds of artificers and workmen are uncertain, and there are considerable differences of opinion as to the correct translation of many terms. The publications of texts afford only a partial knowledge of the matters involved, and though the records at our disposal are peculiarly specific, our knowledge of the substance is vague and uncertain. Contracts, receipts, accounts, lists of officials and servants are all precise, with the precision of legal documents, but it is difficult to translate these records without interpreting them in the light of our own institutions. Furthermore, the actual mass of material is small relative to the needs of the student of social life, and at best we have only a glimpse of the economic arrangements of these Mesopotamian peoples.

In general, industrial arts were less diversified than in Egypt; there was less work done in wood, in the metals, and in leather. The woollen industry was by far the most important of the entire group of <sup>Industry and commerce</sup> occupations if we judge by the references in available sources. The early development of systems of weights and measures, however, and the use of the precious metals as money resulted in the abandonment of pure barter at an early date. There was also a caravan trade with the coast, so that the general aspect of Mesopotamian life is more nearly comparable to modern life than the relatively passive economic system of Egypt. The activity of commercial life brings us rather closer to these peoples than to other peoples of antiquity.

The abundant materials from the reign of Hammurabi (2143-2097 B.C.) afford us references to the following crafts: brick-makers (?), tailors, carpenters, masons, <sup>The list of crafts</sup> branders, surgeons, builders of houses, boat-builders, metal-workers, and weavers. In the code of Hammurabi there are several articles dealing with the sale of beer, or some similar kind of alcoholic drink, but there is no indication of a distinct group of brewers. Tablets of the seventh century B.C. add to this list, spinners, dyers, washermen, bakers, harness-makers, jewelers, potters, wood-carvers, and specialized workers in the various metals.

The status of artisans is somewhat uncertain, because the statements about wages and the hire of artisans cannot be assumed to refer to the hire of free artisans. Slaves were kept, and were systematically farmed out for hire, the proceeds being paid to the master. At the same time there is little doubt but that there were important classes of free artisans, who worked for hire for various individuals, for the King, and for temples.

The temples were, as in Egypt, business institutions of great importance. They possessed large estates which produced grain and wool. These supplies exceeded <sup>The temples</sup> their own needs, and became the basis of commercial activity. The wool was sold at times to artisans;

more frequently, artisans were hired to work the raw material up into cloth. This system was of great antiquity. It is clearly indicated by tablets dating between 2700 and 2580 B.C., and continued without essential change until the seventh century. In one of the earliest temple records on this subject, we find one hundred and ninety-one women set to work in the "weaving-house" on the supplies belonging to the temple. These women were paid wages. Both wool and metal were given out to artisans to be worked up at home. The temples were among the most important centers of the trade in wool and woolens.

Such establishments cannot be brought within the scope of any single classification; least of all can such establishments be classified as large households, in accordance with Bücher's scheme, because their production was designed to be sold in a distant market. It is not wise to endeavor to describe these usages as a single system. There was undoubtedly some genuine wage-work, illustrated by the turning over of bronze to a free metal-worker to be made into a doorway. The issue of a formal receipt for the bronze turned over suggests that the work was done outside the temple grounds, without supervision. When artisans came to the temple and brought raw materials, we may have an indication of craft-work undertaken with a view to sale to fellow townsmen. The supplies of raw wool collected by the temple constituted the most readily available surplus and were thus naturally the basis for this trade. There is therefore a presumption, at least, in favor of the existence of some craft-work. The situation of the women employed on the premises of the temple seems to present strong analogies to a rudimentary factory, and yet it is hardly wise to apply the term without some qualifying adjective. The general aspect of industrial life is too rudimentary to make it desirable to apply any of the modern terms, unless it is clearly recognized that a "putting-out system" or a "factory" can exist in so simple a form as not to be out of keeping with conditions that in general represent the beginnings of craft-industry.

The important revelations of the sources consist in the



clear evidence afforded of production for the relatively distant markets of the Syrian coast towns and Egypt; the evidence of the existence of professionalized crafts; and the indication that the artisans were substantially free men working for wages.

"If an artisan take a son for adoption," says the Code of Hammurabi (sections 188-189), "and teach him his handicraft, one may not bring claim for him. If he do not teach him his handicraft, that son may return to his father's house." Such provisions intimate the existence of a system of apprenticeship for the transmission of craft-knowledge, but one must remember that the full significance of this as of other practices depends in part upon the numbers of persons involved. By the seventh century B.C. there is unmistakable evidence that the members of the various crafts were congregated in special quarters of the towns, as in Egypt. There were also certain officers with authority over the crafts. The transiation of the titles are uncertain and the functions of the officials are unknown. Maspero is inclined to attribute administrative functions to the officials of the Egyptian crafts, but such a supposition reflects medieval analogies rather than contemporary evidence. Writing of the Assyrian officials, Johns inclines to a military interpretation. This would still bear analogy to the obligation of the medieval craftsmen to do watch and ward duty in the city; but such a supposition would not imply the existence of organized craft guilds. That some organization of the members of the crafts began to emerge in the late period is highly probable, with reference both to Egypt and to the cities of Mesopotamia, but we cannot be sure of the nature of the arrangements.

The existence of manufacture for export, of traces of craft organization, even rudimentary establishments for large-scale production, none of these facts should close our eyes to the infancy of organized industry. The types appear, but the scale of all these phenomena is small. Exportation was infrequent, and of

Status of  
artisans

Possible craft  
organization

Craft special-  
ization merely  
beginning

small volume. Crafts were present, but, for the most part, only the most moderate skill was required and some of the differentiation was based on varying degrees of physical fitness rather than upon definite professional skill. A lame man would be as effective as a smith as a man with two good legs; hence in Greek mythology Hephaistos the smith is lame. Edouard Meyer suggests also that Homer is represented as blind, because blind men so characteristically became singers. The singer was naturally thought of as being blind. These suggestions are, of course, pure conjecture, and they are drawn from Greek sources, but if these notions have any validity they would have more than a narrowly local application. They serve a real purpose if they emphasize the slight basis of craft differentiation in these early periods. The processes were in most cases simple, well within the capacities of the more adaptable workers without great preliminary training. The greater abundance of evidence makes it easier to find illustrations for these suppositions in the history of Greek industry, but the qualifications are perhaps even more important for the interpretation of the industrial development of the Egyptian and Mesopotamia peoples.

#### IV. GREECE

The rise of Greek civilization takes place within the general limits of the historic period, so that we catch glimpses of the development considerably before culture had reached the stage of conscious record-making. There is a semi-historic period, of which we gain some knowledge from archeology and poetic literature. These materials, however, are so difficult of interpretation that every possible view is championed by some scholar or scholars. Some say that the Greeks of this period were wholly devoted to agriculture, feared the sea, and therefore engaged in commerce only in the most casual way. Others are convinced that the Greeks were engaged in active commerce with Egypt and the Syrian coast at least a couple of centuries before the Trojan War. Some declare that the

Divergent  
views of early  
Greek devel-  
opment

Greeks merely absorbed various notable features of the culture of Egypt; others reduce the borrowing from Egypt to an inconsiderable minimum.\* Judgment based on the scant evidence in our possession is little more than a reflection of preconceived notions as to what is probable.

In general there is probably a disposition to underestimate the significance of trade among undeveloped peoples.

The presumptions of naïve thought are comprehensively stated in the scheme of development in List's *National System of Political*

Disposition to underestimate the commercial background

*Economy*. The stages of economic evolution are characterized thus: savagery, pastoral culture, agriculture, agriculture combined with manufactures, agriculture combined with manufacture and commerce. Trade is thus made to appear as the climax or final result of a long economic evolution. The widespread disposition to exaggerate the difficulties of transportation confirms the presumption that is dormant in nearly all naïve economic thinking. The wide appeal of Bücher's views depended in no small measure upon the adroit formulation of all these naïve presumptions with all the paraphernalia of erudite scholarship. The study of primitive peoples, together with what we know of the ancient world, shows us that commerce plays an important part even in primitive life. Instead of evolving successively, commerce and industry must needs develop simultaneously, and though there are many reciprocal influences it is most likely that commerce is the conditioning factor in industrial development. This is designed to be the thesis of the present work, and it is hoped that it will be possible to show that the character of industrial development has been at all times a reflection of the commercial background, and that the great changes in industrial organization are the outcome of changes in commercial conditions which promote growth of population, concentration of population, or both gross increase and greater concentration.. Certain aspects of the Industrial Revolution have closed our eyes to these larger relations between industry and commerce.

We can therefore approach these ambiguous indications

of the nature of early Greek development with a presumption in favor of what we may call the commercial theory. This seems, moreover, to be in accord with modern tendencies of critical scholarship. It is obviously desirable to avoid extremes, and it is above all necessary to avoid building elaborate theories of development upon single bits of archeological or literary evidence. Mr. Walter Leaf's studies of the *Iliad* bring to the subject the monographic spirit, and though much must be regarded as mere conjecture the conclusions are significant. His thesis may be stated briefly. The Trojan War seems to him to have been the outcome of economic rather than romantic causes. He regards the enterprise as an attempt on the part of the Greeks to destroy a powerful town which shut them out of the Dardanelles and the Black Sea. He endeavors to show that Troy had been a trading station at which the Greeks met the peoples of the Black Sea under Trojan auspices. Tiring of the payment of tribute and the inconveniences of such indirect methods, the Greeks at last banded together in the great military enterprise. Mr. Leaf brings this view forward with due modesty. Nothing can really be proved. But we can at least recognize the consistency of such an interpretation with the economic conditions of the early period of Greek development.

The industrial growth of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. was in large measure dependent upon the extensive carrying trade that sprang up in the period following the Trojan War. If we include the Phœnician traders, as we should in any study of antiquity, we could say with truth that the brilliant civilization of the Græco-Roman world was based on the spirit of adventure shown by these navigators whose energies brought all the peoples of the Mediterranean world into close contact. The diversity of products was stimulating to industry, as the diversities of culture were stimulating to literature and art.

The study of the economic development of Greece and Rome has produced an antagonism between students of history and students of literature and art that is extremely

unfortunate. It seems at times as if the students of classical culture resented the conclusions of certain historical studies as being an attempt to depreciate the cultural significance of the achievements of the classical period. • There can be no legitimate cause for such alarm. The material concerns of life with which the economist is busied must ever be a means to an end, and not an end in itself. No civilization can be justly appraised in terms of its economic mechanism. At best, economic organization is merely a way of attending to the daily need of material things, and no particular type of mechanism can be deemed a measure of the artistic and spiritual achievements of a people. High artistic accomplishment is not only possible when life is relatively simple, but perhaps more likely to occur. It may be that our elaborate material civilization is a positive hindrance to the attainment of the higher purposes of life.

Classic simplicity and culture

The low standards of artistic achievement in the early Victorian age may really be due to the displacement of the old craft methods by the technique of the Industrial Revolution. Production for the masses is likely to result in the subordination of refinement in execution and design to cheapness. Production of articles of luxury for a wealthy leisure class is by necessity characterized by elegance in conception and execution. The idealization of the medieval craft-workers has made us familiar with these divergent tendencies between artistry of production and cheapness of production, and yet there seems to be some obstacle to the application of these principles to the achievements of the craftsmen of Greece and Rome.

The notable parallels between the classic period and the medieval period are neither willingly nor clearly recognized. In Francotte's excellent study of the industrial development of Greece there is no comparison with the middle ages. He compares Athens with the Manchester and Birmingham of the late nineteenth century: the port of Delos with quays two hundred and fifty meters long is compared with our modern ports with kilo-

Parallels between antiquity and the middle ages

meters of quays. Industry and commerce compare unfavorably with the industry and commerce of Europe since the Industrial Revolution, but if we seek a basis of comparison with conditions definitely prior to the Industrial Revolution the results are different. Germany did not begin to feel the influence of the newer development of industry and commerce until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

At the close of the eighteenth century Prussia still displayed the salient features of medievalism. There were within Prussian boundaries, 1016 places classified as towns or cities. Berlin alone had more than 100,000 inhabitants (153,000), being therefore slightly larger than Athens in the time of Pericles. There were three towns with more than 50,000: Warsaw, 64,000; Breslau, 60,000; Königsberg, 56,000. Syracuse and Corinth were considerably larger than these second-class towns of Prussia. At the most prosperous period of Grecian development they had respectively 110,000 and 90,000 inhabitants. Six towns of Greece are mentioned by Beloch as having between 40,000 and 50,000 inhabitants. Fourteen Prussian towns had slightly more than 10,000 inhabitants; Dantzig, Magdeburg, Elbing, Stettin, Potsdam, Erfurt, Posen, Kalberstadt, Halle, Münster, Hildesheim, Emden, Brandenburg, and Frankfurt-am-Main. Of the remaining 998 cities, 502 had a population of more than 1000 and less than 3000. This distribution of population is characteristically medieval, and such statistics as we have from the classical period reveal conditions that are roughly comparable. Rome, at the height of her prosperity, was larger than any medieval town; but with that exception the distribution of population in the classical period bears significant comparison with the distribution of population in the middle ages.

There is so close a relationship between industry and population, that the similarities underlying urban life lead directly to a presumption in favor of notable similarities in industrial development. With reference to economic conditions, the medieval period has more in common with classical antiquity than with modern times. The Industrial Revolu-

tion marks a transformation of social conditions which separates the modern period distinctively from both the earlier periods. Despite our intellectual and artistic heritage from the classical period, we can interpret the scant evidence bearing on the social life of Greece and Rome only in terms of our knowledge of the middle ages. The so-called "dark ages" constitute perhaps an interlude, but there is no profound change in the general character of economic arrangements; merely the ebb and flow that constitute the movement of all historical growth.

There is enough material to enable us to distinguish some of the periods in the industrial development of the Grecian world. The four or five centuries between the fall of Troy and the early sixth century B.C. are marked by the establishment of the commercial power of the Greeks. Industry responded slowly. The crafts began to emerge, but they were not very clearly differentiated. Metal-workers are mentioned. The smith's forge, like the country stores and smithies of the small towns of our own times, was a resort for the idlers and gossips of the village. There is no indication of specialized work in metals, least of all clear specialization in the preparation of different objects. There were potters, but no specialization of tasks; the vases and other vessels were relatively simple. The builders did everything needful in connection with building houses. They could also build ships. The same word is applied also to makers of household furniture, of ploughs, and objects of horn and ivory. Leather-workers did everything connected with leather, tanning as well as shield-making. These workers were free to the extent of not being the slaves of any one person, but they did not enjoy all the rights of peasants. The craftsmen were employees working for the village as a whole.

Between the sixth and fourth centuries B.C. the specialization of crafts developed rapidly. "In the larger towns," says Xenophon in the *Cyropædia* (VIII, 2), "where many people have similar wants, a single craft is a means of livelihood. Frequently, the craftsman

Rise of craft-  
industry in  
Greece

Specialization  
by processes



does not practice the entire craft: one makes men's shoes, another makes women's shoes; one lives by sewing shoes, another by cutting leather; one cuts out tunics, another devotes himself exclusively to assembling the parts." In the metal industries there were distinct crafts for making each of the pieces of armor and for the different weapons. Helmets, breastplates, plumes, shields, lances, and the like were turned out by different craftsmen. In the making of pottery there was definite division of labor into the fundamental processes: the forming of the vessels on the wheel, the firing and the painting. The dictionaries of antiquities afford some indications of a fairly comprehensive list of crafts, but references are so scattered as to date and locality that it is scarcely safe to endeavor to draw up a list of crafts for any particular period or any single town. We can be sure that craft specialization was far advanced in the Greek period, but we cannot attempt any precise statement.

The third and second centuries B.C. are marked by the decadence of some of the Greek towns, but these changes were the outcome of the loss of political prestige and the consequent loss of some of the artificial advantages that were derived in industry and commerce from the abuse of political power. Such changes, however, effect only particular towns and not the Græco-Roman world as a whole. There was no break in the general course of industrial development.

One of the notable features of the industrial growth of the larger Greek towns is the "factory system." Establishments of twenty or thirty persons existed in several branches of industry. The craftsmen in these undertakings were usually slaves, who worked under the supervision of the owner or his agent. At times the entire group was farmed out to some contractor. Francotte cites a number of cases recorded in Athenian wills. One Conon left two establishments: one of textile workers, one of druggists. Timarchus left a number of industrial slaves: nine shoemakers, a female weaver, a maker of fancy objects, and two gangs of silver miners. The father of Demosthenès left two workshops: one of knife-makers, with a personnel of

Factories



thirty-two or three persons; one of bed-makers, with a personnel of twenty. The vase-painting establishments were of about the same type; between ten and twenty workmen were usually employed, and, although such subjects were rarely chosen for vase-painting, we have a representation of a vase manufactory with eight workmen. All the processes are shown and the general aspect of the workrooms. Separate rooms were required for firing, shaping, and painting. Some portions of the work were done out of doors under canvas shelters, but most of the operations were by necessity done in definite workshops. The methods of signing the vases distinguish between the proprietor and the vase painter responsible for the decorations. These signatures afford clear evidence that this most important industry was not entirely dominated by slave labor. In a number of <sup>Some free</sup> cases the same person is designated as being <sup>artisans</sup> both proprietor and painter. One Athenian painter, Euphronius, rose from being a painter in establishments belonging to others to the proprietorship of an establishment of his own. Such at least is the story that can be read from a number of inscriptions and signatures.

Bücher classified these establishments as cases of "household industry," a household whose membership had been enlarged by the addition of slaves, but still in legal form a household. This is more misleading than helpful. Some free industry existed side by side with these slave establishments, and all were producing goods for sale in the market; at times a local market and at times an export market. The workrooms were not a portion of the dwelling-house; in many cases, at least, they seem to have been specialized quarters exclusively devoted to industry. Francotte still hesitates to apply the term "factory." He fears that the reader will assume the existence of conditions such as <sup>Unwillingness to recognize these factories</sup> followed the Industrial Revolution. All these discussions are a reflection of the unfortunate modes of thought suggested by Rodbertus and Bücher. The character of industrial life is only partially indicated by the forms of organization. The progress of economic evolution

is not entirely a matter of developing certain forms, even if one were to assume that there were no differences to be observed beyond the bare facts of the most general classification. The industrial life of a period can be appraised and described only as a complex of elements. The degree of specialization of crafts must be considered; the extent of the horizontal division of labor, if any; the scale of production and the character of the market; lastly, the forms of organization.

We have been too much inclined to suppose that factories and the factory system are the distinctive and exclusive feature of the Industrial Revolution, forgetting that small factories had emerged at various times and places throughout the period which we think of as dominated by craft industry. There is no reason to feel that there is anything abnormal in the emergence of various small factories in the classical period. Nor is there any reason for hesitating to admit frankly that these sporadic tendencies toward the factory system were rather more conspicuous in classical than in medieval times. The putting-out system dominates the middle ages in the more elaborately developed industries. From the employer's point of view it would doubtless have been more convenient to have his people collected in a workshop, but the development toward the factory was checked. The free workmen of the middle ages disliked the restraints of the factory, and the crafts, composed in large measure of small masters, were able to exert sufficient political pressure to suppress the sporadic attempts to bring workmen together in factories. The significant struggle of the English crafts against these tendencies will be treated in a subsequent chapter.<sup>1</sup> It must needs suffice here to call attention to the fact. Slavery and the absence of any significant craft organization left the employers of the classical period free to organize these small factories, and it is perhaps more significant to recognize this tendency and its causes than to endeavor to obscure the real facts. The existence of these factories does not indicate a departure from the general conditions of craft industry. This degree of capitalistic control,

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, chapter VIII, § III.

which can be expressed either in the factory or in the putting-out system, is a characteristic feature of the later forms of handicraft industry.

It would be highly desirable to be able to reach a definite conclusion with reference to the relative importance of slaves to freemen in industry. It is unfortunately impossible. Using practically the same <sup>Slavery in Greece</sup> general figures from the classical sources, Francotte and Edouard Meyer reach opposite conclusions. A neutral reading of this controversial literature leaves the general impression that the defenders of free labor have the better case. Industry as a whole was not decisively dominated either by free or by slave labor. With the exception of the extractive industries, in Greece free labor at least held its own. The competition of the industrial slaves of the aristocrats was serious but the freeman could none the less live by his craft. Slavery afforded the wealthy an opportunity to participate in the profits of industrial enterprise without loss of caste. Despite competition the two systems could exist side by side without destroying each other; their existence was not exclusively dependent upon their advantages as methods of producing their wares. The free artisan was perhaps a foreigner, excluded from full civil rights; an inconspicuous factor in political and social life, but economically important. In many cities of the ancient world the commerce and industry of the locality was really in the hands of these foreigners; the participation of the aristocrats in business enterprise was somewhat incidental. The casual references in literature are an uncertain index of the proportionate importance of these two elements in business life, as literature was predominantly occupied with the doings of the aristocrats. Other materials are too meager to afford clear evidence of the proportionate importance of these diverse elements in the community.

## V. ROME AND CONSTANTINOPLE

For the last century of the Republic and the period of the Empire considerable information is furnished by inscriptions.

These materials are unsatisfactory in many respects, but in careful hands they reveal many aspects of the organization of the artisans of Rome. It has frequently been presumed that some significant connection existed between the craft

Roman "col- legia" — associations of craftsmen in ancient Rome.

The studies of Waltzing show that the comparisons are misleading and unreal. These Roman organizations assumed a number of fairly distinct forms, but in no case is there justification for any significant comparison with the institutions of the middle ages. The societies for the celebration of funeral rites are similar in many respects to the fraternities or religious guilds of the medieval period, but such societies should be carefully distinguished from craft guilds. The Roman "collegia" seem to have had few distinctively economic functions. They were not comprehensive groupings of all artisans exercising particular crafts. Neither skill nor apprenticeship was an essential condition of entry. The members of the society do not seem to have exercised any of the supervisory powers that are the distinctive feature of the craft organizations of the middle ages.

The inscriptions, however, enable us to gain considerable insight into the degree of industrial specialization at Rome.

The list of crafts The following crafts are mentioned in the inscriptions from which Waltzing prepared his list of corporations at Rome. The crafts have been grouped under the general classifications to facilitate economic analysis:

*Food, and industries connected with food:*

Measurers of grain, workers in public granaries, perfumers and spicers, butchers, inn-keepers, confectioners, cooks, hay-merchants, fruit-sellers, merchants of vegetables, bakers, grain merchants, millers, cattle merchants, merchants of salt meats, wine-sellers, oil merchants, pastry-cooks, fishermen, fish-merchants, salt merchants, pork merchants, shopkeepers.

*Textiles:*

Dyers, fullers, linen merchants, embroiderers, workmen's blouse-makers, tailors.

*Leather:*

Shoemakers, women's shoemakers, tanners, furriers.

*Metals:*

Smiths (bronze), ring-makers, silversmiths, goldsmiths, gold-beaters, money-changers, blacksmiths, sellers of silver vases, mirror-makers.

*Wood and manufactures of wood:*

Joiners and furniture-makers, wood merchants, shipbuilders, carpenters, joiners.

*Stone, clay and building:*

Lime-burners, ditch-diggers, lime-porters, builders, potters, sculptors, stone-sawyers, masons, wreckers of buildings.

*Transport:*

Shippers, muleteers, boatmen of the Tiber, "curatores navium," patrons of lighters on the Tiber.

*Artists, gymnasts, etc.:*

Musicians (horns), horn-players, mimes, poets and actors, lute-players, wild-beast chasers, gladiators.

*Miscellaneous:*

Porters, wreath-makers, jailers, ivory-carvers, wholesalers, bathhouse-keepers, masseurs, barbers, doctors, pavers, merchants of pigments, makers of dice.

The small number of crafts engaged in leather-working and in textiles is noteworthy. There was considerable diversification in the metal trades and elaborate specialization in the preparation of food. Without knowledge of the relative numbers of persons occupied in these crafts, it is hardly justifiable to assume that the textile and leather groups were relatively less important, but there is strong presumption in favor of such a conclusion. The preparation of clothing and leather goods was primarily the work of members of each household. Little specialized skill was required and only the very poor resorted to the markets for the common textiles or leather goods. The list of crafts concerned with the preparation of food products is very impressive, and comparison with the lists of crafts for Paris in the eleventh and thirteenth centuries would suggest that elaborate specialization appears earlier in this general group than in any other.

At Constantinople, toward the close of the ninth century A.D., conditions were more nearly comparable to medieval conditions. The regulations made by the Prefect of the city for the government of the crafts exhibit many features that are definitely analogous to conditions at Paris in the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. The primary civil authority in Constantinople was exercised by an official appointed directly by the Emperor, as the Prefect of Paris was appointed by the King. The Prefect of Constantinople had complete jurisdiction over industrial and commercial matters and issued strict regulations. Some of the crafts at Constantinople had no autonomous powers at all; some seem to have been in the way of acquiring a small measure of autonomy in the enforcement of the rules and customs of the craft. The perfumers were instructed to prevent the preparation or sale of defective or inferior wares "by mutual oversight over each other." The spicers were charged with the supervision of all wares of their craft, in order to prevent the making of hoards, whether by members of the craft or by others. Similar functions were delegated to the chief merchants of pork products. These various functions of supervision are comparable to the "view of the craft" that became the characteristic privilege of the more powerful medieval craft guilds. It would seem that administrative functions were in process of development at Constantinople. The fundamental background can hardly have been very different from the conditions at Rome under the Empire, and thus we may well believe that guilds similar in most features to the medieval guilds might develop in the Roman world, though we have no evidence that the process of development was continued to that point except at Constantinople. The book of the Prefect at Constantinople is therefore an indication that the conditions favorable to the growth of craft gild organization might normally be expected to appear in the course of the industrial development of any large town. This particular form of craft organization should not be associated uniquely with medieval conditions, nor should it be presumed to be merely

copied from some Roman or Eastern model. When the degree of craft specialization had become considerable, it was perfectly natural that the administrative officers should delegate certain functions of supervision that could best be discharged by persons acquainted with the technique of the craft. The gild can best be regarded as a spontaneous outgrowth of industrial conditions.



## CHAPTER III

### CRAFTS AND CRAFT GILDS IN MÉDIEVAL FRANCE

#### I

THE break-up of the Roman Empire was followed by different results in the various European provinces. In England and in Germany the Teutonic influences speedily became predominant. In Italy there was a marked decline, as soon as the provinces ceased to send their tribute in money and in kind. In France the disappearance of the administrative framework of the Empire left many aspects of social life unchanged. The Roman cities of southern France maintained themselves after a fashion and the commercial life that had developed was not destroyed. The Teutonic tribes entering Gaul brought with them many new political conceptions, but the economic life of the Roman province was accepted by them and many elements of Roman culture were adopted. France became by force of circumstances one of the closest bonds between the old Roman civilization and the new Teutonic civilization that was rapidly assuming significant form. The relative continuity of social growth is a notable feature of the history of France; elsewhere in the north of Europe the break with the institutions of the Empire was so complete that the Roman background exerted little or no direct influence upon the course of development.

Much of the controversy that has existed among scholars as to the relative importance of Roman and Teutonic institutions would seem to be resolved by frank recognition of the diversities of development in different portions of Europe. There were many elements of Roman agrarian and industrial institutions that could be harmonized with the usages of the invaders. Roman customs could easily be incorporated with the Teutonic modes of life without making the final result essentially different from results achieved in provinces where

Roman influences were negligible. The condition of the un-free tillers of the soil displays most notably the possibilities of reaching substantially the same results from both Roman and Teutonic backgrounds. The existence of Roman influences in certain sections thus does not even create a presumption in favor of similar influences elsewhere. The French writers who find Roman influences in France are therefore quite as trustworthy as the German writers who deny the existence of similar influences in Germany and in England.

With reference to commerce and industry the situation is somewhat different, because France and Italy were more important both before and after the fall of Rome. There was more urban concentration, more commerce, and a more highly diversified industrial life. Many of these economic activities survived the tumult of the invasions. The administrative regulations of the Empire disappeared almost entirely, most particularly the corporate organization of the crafts, but the crafts themselves survived. The commercial and industrial life of Roman Gaul exerted a notable influence upon the economic development of the Teutonic kingdoms that established themselves during the invasions. This persistence of Roman influences in France is of more than local significance. Industry and commerce affect larger areas than the localities in which they are primarily concentrated. At the least one must include the entire market area in studies of their influence, and, as England and Germany were partly dependent upon France for the sale of their raw products and for some of the manufactured articles, the industrial development of France in the "dark ages" is part of the general history of Europe. The commercial and industrial system that finally took definite form in the medieval period was an outgrowth of the commercial importance of Roman Gaul.

The precise extent of direct Roman influences can scarcely be determined. Flach believes that many of the old Roman corporations became "confréries" — associations of craftsmen for the common celebration of religious festivals and of masses for the souls of comrades. Fagniez, too,

Importance of  
France in  
Europe

believes that some survivals of the Roman organizations may have persisted throughout the period of the greatest disorders, becoming one of several elements in the growth of the newer institutions that emerge into the light of historical knowledge in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

In the study of industrial development an undue share of attention has been given to the administrative organization of craft-workers. There is a disposition to forget that the fact of primary economic significance is the occupational specialization. The division of labor into the crafts must needs precede the formation of administrative bodies based on the crafts. It is therefore not merely possible, but inevitable, that there should be periods in which handicrafts exist as specific professions despite the absence of corporations of the Roman type or guilds of the medieval type. There is no clear evidence of corporate organization of the crafts in Greece, neither is there any definite indication of craft organization in the interval between the sixth century A.D. and the twelfth century. But in both periods there was active growth, though conditions were widely different in each case. A certain measure of superficial decay must needs have followed the break-up of the Roman Empire. The domination of Rome had forced a premature industrial growth that could not be maintained. In Roman Gaul, for instance, there were eight imperial establishments engaged in the making of weapons. The artisans were technically free, but they were subject to a definite obligation to pursue that craft under the given conditions, so that they enjoyed only a much qualified freedom. Their product was their contribution to the State. With the passing of the Empire all such forced industrial effort would inevitably pass into channels more in accord with the genuine needs of the community. The flow of commerce toward Rome declined, but inasmuch as it had never been a genuine reciprocal trade, it was hardly a retrograde movement. Changes occurred in the industries which ministered primarily to the wealthy city dwellers of the Empire. The overthrow of that particular group of parasites naturally

caused some decline in the industries which ministered to them. Fewer objects of luxury were made, and the old refinements of execution disappeared. The market had changed. Certain arts were lost or neglected. The transition from the restraints and compulsions of the Roman system to the freer régime of the middle ages involved destruction as well as construction. The fundamental specializations of occupations seem to have maintained themselves.

The craftsmen were sheltered during the period of greatest disorder in the monasteries and on the great rural estates of the feudal lords. A small number of artisans maintained themselves unattached, but they <sup>Persistence of crafts</sup> must have been exceptional, like the small freeholders in agriculture. There were such freemen, but they were not numerous nor characteristic of the age.

On the great estates the craft-workers were relatively numerous, but they were serfs. They were nevertheless better off than the slaves of the old Roman system. They could not be slain with impunity, though the offense of murder was punished primarily by the graduated fines common to all early Teutonic law. The wergilds of artisans varied according to the character of the craft. For the murder of a goldsmith one paid one hundred and fifty sous, while the worker in iron was valued at fifty sous. A carpenter was appraised at forty sous, a plain laborer or swine-herd at thirty sous. Some of the industrial work on the domains was done by the artisans in their cottages; much, however, was done in general workshops. The women in particular were gathered together in a special group of buildings called the "gynceum." These were similar in all <sup>The</sup> respects to the establishments of the Græco-<sup>"gynceum"</sup> Roman world for the utilization of the women on the great estates, though men were seldom employed in them by the lords of the early Teutonic kingdoms. It was presumed that the gynceum would be managed in all respects by the wife of the lord, but there are references to laxity of management. As many as forty women were employed at times, but references are too scanty to admit of statements as to the

characteristic size of these establishments. The work consisted primarily of textile manufacture; weaving, dyeing, and the making of garments. These were used by the household in part, but there was frequently, if not usually, some surplus for sale in the market. With reference to men, the domains were probably significant only as an asylum for the metal-workers, the masons, carpenters, and such craftsmen.

The great refuges for the artisans were the monasteries and episcopal establishments. These frequently became aggregations of people that bore all outward semblance to a small town. The Abbey of Saint Riquier in the ninth century

**Crafts in the  
ninth century**

was the nucleus of twenty-five hundred houses, which would indicate a population of more than ten thousand souls. A portion of the settlement was given over to the artisans, who were grouped in streets. The enumeration includes: wholesale merchants, smiths, shield-makers, saddlers, bakers, shoemakers, butchers, fullers, furriers, wine merchants, beer-sellers. Each of these crafts was obliged to furnish wares to the Abbey, but it was a group obligation and the quantities of material indicated leave it fairly certain that the artisans could dispose freely of much of their time. The cartulary of Saint Vincent at Le Mans mentions artisans rather more frequently than other cartularies, so that the list of crafts referred to in the eleventh century represents perhaps the higher developments of handicraft industry around monastic foundations. The following crafts are mentioned: merchants, carpenters, weavers, various kinds of workers in gold and silver, tailors, shoemakers, butchers, bakers, wax-makers, smiths, drapers, furriers, linen merchants, leather merchants, salt merchants, glass-setters. It is noteworthy that weavers and tailors seldom appear in the earlier enumerations of the craftsmen that are partially free. The textile industries were largely in the hands of women in the earlier period, as is shown by the *Polyptique* of the Abbey of Saint Germain des Prés (close of the eighth century). Linen and serge were made in the general workshops of the abbey (the *gynæceum*) and in the cottages of the serfs whose wives were required to furnish stipulated quantities of cloth. As in the

classical period, the textile industries were slow to become established as specialized occupations for men.

It may be noted in passing that the classification of these monastic and feudal establishments presents the same difficulties as the large establishments of the classical period. They are a part of a patriarchal household or of a feudal household, but it is misleading to classify them as "household industries" because the product was sold in distant markets. Except perhaps for small differences in the quantities of goods produced, these early medieval establishments differed in no essential respect from the "factories" based on slave labor during the classical period. This tendency toward the aggregation of unfree industrial workers is, however, to be distinguished from any tendencies toward the aggregation of free workers. The motives are different. Free laborers will be brought together only under the influence of some consciousness of economic advantages to be derived from the organization of the work in hand. The aggregation of unfree laborers is more largely determined by the servile status of the laborer than by profit-seeking. With rare exceptions, these groups were indeed mere aggregations of women; no real organization of work was achieved by bringing them together. They worked side by side perhaps in a large room, but the work could doubtless have been as efficiently done in the cottages of the workers.

We know less of the free craftsmen of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries than we know of the same class in the Græco-Roman period. In the feudal hierarchy they had no place, and consequently they are seldom mentioned in the scant records of the period.

## II

The eleventh century marks the beginning of a new epoch in the development of industry: distinguished by the political emancipation of the artisan and a great increase in the degree of occupational specialization. The <sup>Rise of towns</sup> rise of the free towns is the political expression of the new status acquired by the commercial and industrial classes.

Throughout the classical period and in the centuries immediately following the Teutonic invasions, industry and commerce had occupied an inferior place in the social order. Persons of social consequence were excluded from the direct practice of such occupations, though it was not a derogation of their caste to maintain groups of servile artisans as slaves or serfs. The commercial and industrial classes were more or less completely deprived of legal rights. The *metic*, or stranger, that controlled the commercial enterprise of the Greek cities, was tolerated and allowed some privileges, but he was definitely excluded from citizenship. The foreigner at Rome enjoyed a larger measure of legal rights, being subject to a legal system that afforded more scope for individual initiative than the laws pertaining to citizens. Finally, indeed, these legal differences disappeared at Rome, but much of the old prejudice survived. It was respectable to be a great landowner, or a venial official, but it was not conceivable that a person of consequence should be directly engaged in commerce and industry.

The rise of the medieval towns, composed primarily of merchants and artisans, permanently altered the social standing of these groups. They too became a distinct caste. They occupied a position that was inferior socially to that of the noble, the ecclesiastic, or the public officials, but they soon became economically and politically of coördinate importance. In the complex struggles between kings, barons, and the Church, the Third Estate occupied a position of strategic importance. They were courted by both kings and nobles. During the classical period, this class was politically subordinate to the landed aristocracy resident in the towns; they now became an independent political factor. The urban centers became a focus of industrial and commercial interests. Down to the Industrial Revolution the structure of commercial and industrial life was dominated by the institutions that took form in the long period that began in the eleventh century.

This period of urban growth was one of especial prosperity for France; some writers even have said that France has never



been more prosperous than at the beginning of the fourteenth century when the new order had become definitely established. The figures that we have for the population of France lend plausibility to this view. It is estimated that there were about twenty or twenty-two millions of people living within the territorial limits of France as they stood in 1914. There was no considerable growth of population until the eighteenth century; the vicissitudes of pestilence and wars prevented any consistent increase. Paris, according to an enumeration of 1292, had a population of slightly more than 200,000; and in 1328, the usual calculations indicate 274,000. Relatively to other portions of Europe France must have occupied a singularly favorable position. It is likely that she enjoyed a degree of material prosperity that was equaled only in isolated portions of Europe. The Low Countries and parts of Italy shared in this material development, but no large country was as favorably situated. The advance in economic organization can thus be most advantageously studied in France, and most especially in Paris, its largest city.

It is a piece of rare good fortune that we have a fairly accurate measure of the growth of occupational specialization during the period. There is an enumeration of the occupations pursued at Paris during the latter half of the eleventh century in the *Dictionary of Jean Garlande*. Toward the close of the thirteenth century we have two sources of information: the *Book of the Crafts*, a record of the customs of the crafts made at the instance of Etienne Boileau, Provost of Paris, 1258-70; and the tax-rolls of Paris, for the years 1292 and 1300, which give the occupations of most of the persons enumerated. All these records are less accurate than we might wish, particularly the *Dictionary of Jean Garlande*, but the combined evidence of the *Book of the Crafts* and the tax-rolls must give us a well-nigh comprehensive survey of the industrial organization for that period. Thirty-seven occupations are described by Jean Garlande, one hundred crafts are enumerated in the *Book of the Crafts*, and two hundred and twenty-five industrial and commercial

Prosperity of  
FranceRecords of  
craft life

occupations are mentioned in the tax-rolls of 1292. The tax-roll mentions all occupations, but it will be wise to confine our attention to industrial and commercial occupations, excluding, for instance, porters, boatmen, public officials, and the like. Many of the occupations listed occur only once or twice, so that the number of important occupations is not inconsistent with the number of organized crafts enumerated in the *Book of the Crafts*. The number of occupations organized as crafts, however, must have been somewhat more than one hundred. Occupations with less than ten persons were frequently so organized, and there were one hundred and thirty-four occupations listed in 1292 as having more than five persons. The *Book of the Crafts* does not purport to be a comprehensive enumeration of crafts, and several occupations were combined in one craft in a number of cases. A number of occupations listed in the roll of 1292, but not mentioned in the *Book of the Crafts*, received statutes as crafts early in the following century. It is thus certain that occupational specialization proceeded faster than the development of crafts with customs or statutes.

In any study of medieval crafts it is necessary to include two groups of occupations which stand somewhat outside the industrial field: the retail and wholesale merchants, and the persons engaged in the preparation of foodstuffs. Study of the merchandizing crafts is of especial importance, as they serve as a measure of many changes in the market that would otherwise escape our attention. The existence of such crafts emphasizes the importance of distant markets, and in the presence of such tangible evidence of elaborately organized trade, it is difficult to understand the tenacity with which many writers insist upon the mythical direct contact between the medieval craftsman and the consumer. In every large town there were three groups of crafts; those occupied with purely local concerns, butchers, bakers, candle-makers, brewers, and the like; those engaged in production with reference to a distant as well as the local market — the various textile crafts, the leather workers, and the metal-work-

The tradesmen

Crafts and town life

ers fall within this group; finally, there were merchandising crafts, a few definitely concerned with the wholesale trade, mostly, however, engaged in retail trade. The drapers were wholesale dealers in woolens; the mercers, wholesale dealers in silks and wares from Italy; the spicers, or grocers as they came to be called later, dealt in spices, drugs, oils, and other wares. The scope of the trade proper to these three great wholesale crafts was constantly enlarged, but the original division of business was roughly as indicated and the extensions of later years were a natural outcome of these original lines of demarcation. The development of these crafts and of their powers constitutes an important chapter in commercial history.

The crafts occupied solely with local needs appear almost everywhere, and usually rose to positions of power and affluence. The crafts of butchers and bakers were usually composed of wealthy men, and in many towns acquired a significant place in municipal politics. The merchandising crafts were also present in most towns, and always important. The crafts that represented the export industries varied, of course, in different regions: metal <sup>Regional</sup> <sup>specialization</sup> industries were most highly developed in Germany, Italy, and parts of Spain; the preparation of the finer grades of leather was originally a specialty of the Spanish towns, but these processes of tanning spread northward rapidly and gained a strong position in France; the woolen industry was the predominant export industry in northern France, the Low Countries, and later in England. In the woolen industry regional specialization was carried to great lengths; the weavers of each town confined their attention to a single type of cloth, or at the most to a few types. The different types of cloth were thus designated at the outset by the name of the town in which they were made, and these names persisted long after the diffusion of the industry had spread the manufacture to other towns and countries.

## THE CRAFTS OF PARIS: LATE ELEVENTH CENTURY

After the *Dictionary of Jean Garlande*

*Foods, and the Preparation of Food:*

## (a) Raw materials:

(none)

## (b) Intermediate products:

(none)

## (c) Finished products:

Bakers, pastry-cooks, makers of meat-pies, poultry-cooks.

## (d) Merchandising crafts:

Bakers selling their own product, sellers of cakes and wafers, sellers of cakes and pastry, sellers of fruit, sellers of wine.

*Leather:*

## (a) Raw materials:

Tanners, furriers.

## (b) Intermediate products:

Lorimers (makers of the metal fixtures for harness). *See below.*

## (c) Finished products:

Workers in cordovan leather (shoemakers), gloves, saddlers, shield-makers, cobblers, belt-makers.

## (d) Merchandising crafts:

Retailers of caps, girths, belts, and purses, retailers of shoes.

*Metals:*

## (a) Raw materials:

Blacksmiths, goldsmiths.

## (b) Intermediate products:

Lorimers, cutlers, buckle-makers.

## (c) Finished products:

Sword-grinders, bell-founders, goblet-menders, broach-makers.

## (d) Sellers of pins, razors, soap, mirrors, etc.

*Textiles:*

## (a) Raw materials:

(none)

## (b) Intermediate products:

Weavers (women).

## (c) Finished products:

Dyers, fullers, cap-makers.

## (d) Merchandising crafts:

Drapers, retailers of cloaks, etc.

In the list of crafts given by Jean Garlande the retailing crafts and crafts occupied with local needs predominate. There were criers of wine, of cakes, and of wafers; persons who circulated in the streets selling their wares or urging the advantages of particular wine-shops upon the passers. Most retailing, however, was not itinerant. Selling was done in shops or stalls; fruit, cakes, and pastry could all be purchased in such fashion, as also a variety of manufactured articles. Pins, soap, mirrors and razors were the specialty of one class of sellers; cloaks, undergarments, caps, girths, belts, purses, and shoes were to be had of various other retailers. The preparation of food occupied a small group of crafts. The butchers are not mentioned, but they must have existed as a distinct occupation, as we have references to them in charters of the following century which speak of them as having been long in existence. Some writers even believe that the butchers of Paris maintained some sort of organization throughout the period between the fall of Rome and the twelfth century.

The degree of specialization in the leather, textile, and metal industries was not great. There is little reason to suppose that any leather goods found their way <sup>Leather-</sup> out of Paris at this time, but a notable import <sup>working</sup> trade is indicated. The tanners prepared only the coarser kinds of leather; the types tanned with oak bark, grades of leather that were used only in heavy goods. The finer grades of oil-tanned leathers were all imported at this time. Originating in Spain and associated with Cordova, these leathers were called "corduan," and the workers in such leathers were thus dubbed "corduanners," a word which was crudely reproduced in English as "cordwainer." This craft later specialized in shoemaking, but at this time the Parisian workmen made all types of fine leather goods. It is interesting to note the early distinction between the cobbler, who repaired shoes, and the makers of new shoes. The metal-workers were chiefly engaged in the finishing crafts, the materials being imported in an advanced stage of manufacture.

The textile crafts enumerated represent primarily the finishing processes. Specialized women weavers are mentioned, but it is fairly certain that the chief textile <sup>Textile workers</sup> crafts were concerned with fulling and dyeing. The drapers, at this time, can hardly have been occupied with anything but their proper business of wholesaling. Inasmuch as cloth became later the most important industrial export of Paris, this tardy development of weaving as a distinct occupation for men speaks eloquently of the slow growth of industry up to the eleventh century. The importance of the weavers at the close of the thirteenth century shows how great a change took place in the intervening period.

The tax-rolls of 1292 and 1300 enable us to form some opinion of the relative importance of the various occupational groups. The striking feature of the figures is the clear evidence that the textile and clothing group had only recently become coördinate in importance with the leather and food groups.

NUMBERS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN THE VARIOUS INDUSTRIAL GROUPS  
PARIS, 1292 AND 1300

Group	Number of persons, 1292	Per cent of total	Number of persons 1300
Foods and food products.....	956	20.94	(not comparable)
Leather.....	933	20.44	1223
Metals.....	606	13.27	729
Textiles.....	251		632
Clothing.....	667		811
Together.....	918	20.11	1243
Wood.....	340	7.45	289
Building trades.....	194	4.25	225
Ecclesiastical ornaments.....	77	1.69	83
Miscellaneous.....	541	11.85	(not comparable)
	4565	100.00	

The increase in the numbers of persons reported in the leather and textile trades in 1300 is partly due to the difference in the character of the taxes imposed. The taxes of 1300 fell upon the poorest artisans to a greater extent than did the taxes of 1292. The lists are thus somewhat short of being comprehensive; conclusions must thus be subject to qualification, but it would seem likely that there had been some change in the occupational groupings. The period was one of rapid growth in the population of Paris; at least such is the conclusion reached by students of population, but their computations being based upon these tax-rolls must be subject to the same elements of error as our industrial statistics.

CLASSIFICATION OF OCCUPATIONS ACCORDING TO SIZE: TAX-ROLLS OF  
1292 AND 1300

	<i>Less than 5 persons</i>	5-9	10-19	20-39	40-59	60-99	100-199	200 or over
1292	91	40	34	31	11	11	5	2
1300	224	35	31	30	8	7	8	4

In 1292, 225 occupations were enumerated; in 1300, 348; the difference is largely due to the inclusion in the lists of 1300 of a large number of occupations practiced by one, two, or three persons. The most notable change occurs among the weavers of whom 82 were enumerated in 1292 and 360 in 1300. The increase was greatest in the textile and leather groups, and it is for this reason that there is reason to suppose that there was some actual growth even in so short a period.

The classification of the crafts according to groups and stages of production is perhaps more interesting than statistics of numbers. The elaborate division of labor that existed can be shown in no other way, and the notion of the craftsman as maker of a finished product is so widespread that emphasis upon the disintegration of the process of production is highly desirable. Marx appre-

*Analysis of  
the list of crafts*



ciated the importance of this tendency toward a disintegration of the industrial processes into their essential stages, but he does not seem to have realized how early the change took place. One must, of course, recognize that the development of occupational specialization in Paris was greater than in the smaller towns, but when all allowance has been made for the diversities of chronology in different places, it would seem that one were justified in saying that the beginning of the great economic development that was associated with the growth of the towns was most significantly marked by a notable increase in the process of industrial disintegration.

#### OCCUPATIONS AT PARIS IN 1300

##### *Foods, foodstuffs, and by-products:*

###### (a) Raw materials:

Sellers of wheat, measurers of grain, ~~sellers~~ of flour, sellers of oats, of hay, of forage-stuff.

Butchers, skinners, measurers of wine.

###### (b) Intermediate products:

Millers, oven-tenders, tripe-sellers.

###### (c) Finished products:

Bakers (bread), bakers of various kinds of fancy cakes (oubliers, fougiers, gastelliers), pudding-makers.

Brewers, cooks, poultry-cooks, fried-food sellers, sauce-makers, candle-makers, soap-makers.

###### (d) Merchandising crafts:

Bakers selling their own product, regraters of bread and other foods, innkeepers (two kinds, ostelliers, taverniers), wholesalers of wine.

Sellers of garlic, of salt, of spices, of herbs, of fruit, of mustard, of milk, of cheese, of oil, of fish, of herring.

##### *Leather and articles made of leather:*

###### (a) Raw materials:

Tanners in oil, tanners in bark, tanners of sheepskins, parchment-makers, furriers.

###### (b) Intermediate products:

Leather painters. (See also the forimers and nail-makers under the metal trades, and the saddle-bow-makers under wood.)

###### (c) Finished products:

Saddlers, harness-makers, two kinds of shoemakers (corduanners — high-grade shoes; savetonniers — cheap shoes), cobblers, glove-makers, belt-makers, purse-makers.

## (d) Merchandising crafts:

None dealing exclusively in leather goods.

*Metals:*

## (a) Raw materials and heavy work:

Horse-shoers, blacksmiths, silversmiths, goldsmiths, tin-smiths, coppersmiths, refiners of gold and silver, gold-thread-makers, gold-beaters, workers in hammered copper and tin.

## (b) Intermediate products:

Makers of plain nails, makers of fancy nails, bolt-makers, button-makers, iron-buckle-makers, brass-buckle-makers, ring-makers, lorimers.

## (c) Finished products:

Cutlers, makers of knife-handles, shears-makers, ornaments of swords, scabbard-makers, chain-makers, fancy-chain-makers, fish-hook-makers, pin-makers, locksmiths, spur-makers.

## (d) Persons rendering services directly to the consumer:

Grinders of knives, grinders and mounters of swords.

## (e) Makers of weapons and armor:

Makers of bows, arrows, and cross-bows, arrow-makers, armorers (both of men and horses), makers of two kinds of cuirass, of chain mail, of metal plates, shield-makers (linen, leather, copper), helmet-makers.

*Textiles:*

## (a) Sellers of raw materials:

Wool merchants, hemp merchants, flax merchants.

## (b) Preparation of raw materials:

Wool-combing and spinning (mentioned in two or three places), spinners of silk (two kinds, *grands fuseaux*, *à petits fuseaux*).

## (c) Intermediate products:

Weavers of woolens, of linen, of canvas, of tapestry (two kinds, *tapis sarrasinois*, *tapis nostrez*), weavers of silk ribbons, weavers of silk kerchiefs.

## (d) Finishing processes:

Dyers, calenderers, fullers, shearmen.

## (e) Merchandising crafts:

Drapers (sellers of both domestic and imported cloth), sellers of imported canvas, mercers (sellers of silks).

*Clothing and garment-making:*

## (a) Raw materials (other than textiles):

Sellers of felt, of plumes.

## (b) Intermediate products:

Sewers (male and female), lace-makers.

## (c) Finished products:

Tailors, breeches-makers, trousers-makers, eleven different kinds of headdress-makers, each a distinct occupation.

## (d) Merchandising crafts:

Friperers (dealers in second-hand clothes), mercers.

*Wood and manufactures of wood:*

## (a) Dealers in unwrought wood:

Sellers of firewood, sellers of charcoal.

## (b) General wood-workers:

Carpenters, turners.

## (c) Makers of specialties:

Coopers (two kinds — of barrels with wooden hoops, of barrels with iron hoops), wagon-makers, wheel- and plough-wrights, makers of writing-tables, trunk-makers, makers of jewel-caskets, makers of croquet-mallets, makers of altars.

## (d) Merchandising crafts:

Sellers of wooden vessels.

*Building trades:*

Markers of stones for cutting, cutters of stone, mortar-men (mortelliers), masons, plasterers, slaters, tilers, tile-makers.

*Ecclesiastical-ornament makers:*

Chasuble makers, sculptors of images, painters of images, bead-makers (several kinds are distinguished).

*Personal service and miscellaneous:*

Barbers, bath-house keepers, launderers (men and women), surgeon doctors (men and women), fencing-masters, money-changers, brokers.

Bushel-basket-makers, basket-makers, ash merchants, straw-sellers, wax-workers, lute-makers, cut-glass workers, glaziers, potters (clay, copper, and tin, each a special group), dice-makers.

Lantern-makers (horn), dealers in horn, comb-makers.

Jewelers, makers of drinking-cup de luxe (usually of agate).

Illuminators of manuscripts, scribes (copyists), book-binders, book-sellers.

The relation of these highly specialized crafts to each other varied in the different occupational groups; in some cases the product really passed through the hands of the whole group of crafts; in some cases the specialization was associated with household work. In the group of

Craftsmen and consumers

crafts concerned with wheat and wheat products, we find retail wheat-sellers, flour-sellers, millers, oven-tenders, and bakers of various types of things. But the wheat merchant did not sell crude wheat to the millers, nor did the millers sell exclusively to flour merchants; least of all did the bakers buy of wheat merchants or depend upon peddlers and retailers to sell their bread. The bakers of bread bought crude wheat in the neighborhood and had it ground on their account. They baked and sold their own product. The poorest classes were largely dependent upon the bakers for their supply of bread, but only the poorest people bought bread. Those who were better off bought wheat or flour. If wheat were bought they must needs have it ground at their expense; there was more waiting; some considerable stock had to be kept on hand. These different crafts thus dealt with families of various degrees of wealth. The establishments of the nobility and the Church were usually supplied with grain and provisions directly from their estates, without recourse to the markets of Paris or the neighboring towns. Within the households of the magnates, however, the division of labor was quite as elaborate as in the community at large, except for the merchandising functions. The variety of fine pastry-cooks listed reflects the desire of citizens of easy circumstances to have some of the good things enjoyed by the wealthy. The bourgeois who could hardly buy bread without some loss of caste could properly enough buy fruit pasties and fancy cakes. There were thus many degrees of directness of connection between production and consumption. The very poor were served by the relatively indirect processes of food production, the very rich were maintained almost directly by the service of their establishment.

The dependence of the wealthy upon the labor of free artisans is most conspicuous in other occupational groups. In leather, metals, textiles, and clothing much craft-work was dominated by the desires of the wealthy. Saddles and harness were elaborately tooled and adorned. There were two distinct grades of shoes, and the better grades made from cordovan leather furnished employ-

Luxuries

ment for the larger number of workmen. Gloves, belts, and purses were for the most part articles of luxury. Among the metal-workers, the goldsmiths were one of the most important crafts, and there were several other crafts that specialized in objects of luxury. The most striking single illustration of specialization in the production of luxuries is the presence of eleven different crafts concerned with the making of head-dresses. There were two main groups, hats or caps, and kerchiefs.

Nearly all of the finished leather and textile products passed successively through the stages of production suggested by the occupational divisions. The **Increased specialization** change that took place in these branches of manufacture between the eleventh century and the close of the thirteenth century is notable. In the eleventh century most leather was imported; at the close of the thirteenth century, nearly all kinds were produced locally, though it is hardly to be presumed that the entire demand was supplied by the local production. Saddlers and harness-makers were partially dependent also upon the products of wood- and metal-workers. Saddle-bows were made by a separate craft, and the metal parts of saddles and bridles were made by the wealthy craft of lorimers. Both of these products involved three stages of production, and in the thirteenth century the consumer rarely came in contact with all the craft-workers concerned.

The inferences that can be drawn from materials in the *Book of the Crafts* indicate that leather was purchased outright from the tanners and curriers by the crafts **Saddlers and lorimers** engaged in subsequent processes of production, but the saddlers seem to have had saddle-bows made for them by hired craftsmen, and the lorimers frequently employed leather-workers to set their bits and finishings in the harness. The harness-makers objected to this, but it was doubtless a persistent feature of the industry. Thus, in one case the craft concerned with finishing the product undertook supervision of some of the intermediate stages, and in the other, craftsmen concerned with an intermediate product

had the finishing done for them. The lorimers sold some finished products and some intermediate products. The complexities of medieval industrial conditions were due to the variety of ways in which this slight measure of general supervision could be maintained. The degree of disintegration suggested by the specialization of occupations was never an established fact. Some craftsmen hired out to members of other crafts, but without the close and permanent contracts that would create the relations that we associate with the terms "employer" and "employee." It was wage-work, but wage-work for a producer. The distinction may not seem very significant, but it is really of moment in any study of the development of the wage-earning class. At this time there were wage-earners, but no class of wage-earners: none were permanently or exclusively wage-earners; there were alternatives of employment that do not exist when the distinctions between employer and employee are sharply drawn.

One entire occupational group, the oven-tenders, including ninety-four names on the roll of 1292, must have been employed by various kinds of bakers, and though they may have had opportunities to become bakers themselves, there is no clear reference that would warrant such an assumption. In the textile trades, the fullers and shearmen were primarily employed by other craftsmen. They were sometimes employed by weavers, sometimes by dyers, conditions in the woolen industry at Paris at this time were highly unstable. Some weavers had acquired considerable means and occupied themselves wholly with the giving-out of work to fullers, shearmen, and dyers. Much dyeing was done on their own premises, too, despite the protests of the dyers, whose only consolation was the concession of exclusive right to dye with woad for the various blues. The drapers, originally cloth merchants, also began to concern themselves with manufacture, giving out work to weavers and others. There was thus some small degree of integration in this as in other industries. It is an indication that the beginnings of capital-

Wage-earners

Capitalists

istic control reach far back into the past, to a period that is not usually thought of as capitalistic in any sense. But if the term is used with minute discrimination, the high degree of disintegration is in itself an indication that the fundamental conditions of capitalistic industry were present. The scale of business enterprise was small, so that the problems of capitalistic control were not conspicuous, perhaps not even recognizable, if one insists upon associating the notion of capital with the scale of production that is dominant to-day. From the standpoint of analysis, however, it is wise to distinguish differences in kind from differences in degree. Capitalistic control had appeared in Paris by the close of the thirteenth century, though to a slight and uncertain extent. The outlines of a putting-out system can be seen in a number of industries, though without the definiteness of subordination of the various crafts that characterizes the putting-out system as it existed at the eve of the Industrial Revolution.

### III

Apart from the casual assistance rendered by wife and daughters, the master craftsman had assistants of two classes; Journeymen apprentices, young men or boys learning the and apprentices trade; journeymen, young men who had completed their apprenticeship, but for one reason or another had not yet become established masters. These distinctions, based primarily upon the degree of maturity and training of the workman, must be very old; and although these subordinate classes of persons were ultimately affected by the corporate privileges acquired by the master craftsmen, it would be an error to suppose that these lower ranks of workmen were in any sense created by the statutes of the crafts. These subordinate positions in the industrial world were a natural and inevitable outcome of the fundamental conditions of handicraft industry. Work was done almost entirely in the house of the master: shops, such as they were, being hardly more than a room or other portion of the dwelling given over exclusively to craft-work. In the ordinary course of things, craft knowledge was transmitted from father to son, and,



unless some special arrangement were made, craft knowledge could scarcely be secured in any other way. The narrow hereditary succession, however, was not followed very strictly during the middle ages. There was a deal of free choice of occupation, and there are suggestions that somewhat similar conditions prevailed during the classical period among free artisans.

When a boy desired to take up a craft other than that of his father, it could be arranged after the manner of an adoption. In becoming an apprentice the boy ac- <sup>Status of</sup>quired by necessity many of the elements of the <sup>the apprentice</sup> status of the man's son: the contract of apprenticeship was in fact an instrument which provided for a qualified adoption — adoption for a period of years. The long periods of apprenticeship and the early age at which boys were apprenticed reflect this aspect of the arrangement. The boy was turned over to the master at twelve years, or the like, and was expected to serve him faithfully for the prescribed interval. The master was under obligation to supply all his wants, and to teach him the craft. It was presumed that the master would get enough work out of the boy to afford him reasonable compensation for his pains, and all too frequently the apprentices were a lucrative source of cheap labor. It is very difficult to determine the actual scale of industrial enterprise during the middle ages, because the apprentice was a notable source of gain, if he was used definitely as a helper instead of being taught the craft. Many masters secured considerable numbers of apprentices and established shops which would perhaps bear comparison with the "factories" of the classical period. The attempts to limit the number of apprentices, that are notable in the gild statutes, were in part due to some desire to protect the apprentice. If there were many, none of them were likely to learn much. The maintenance of a small scale of production was thus at once a measure of protection to the small masters, to the apprentices, and to the standards of workmanship. The master had authority to apply corporal punishment. Many contracts of apprenticeship, also, make special mention of

the master's wife, bringing out the sense in which the apprentice was received into the family.

The position of the journeyman undergoes many changes in the course of gild development. In the early period there was no artificial barrier to prevent the journeyman from becoming a master. His position differed from that of a master primarily in two respects: he had little money and no home. These two qualifications, money and a home, were essential to the position of a master, and of the two the latter was the more important. The master must needs have a wife and a home because both journeymen and apprentices must needs have board and lodging provided. Besides, there must be some place for a shop. The household was the industrial unit, and for that reason, if for no other, the unmarried workman was inevitably obliged to attach himself to some established household until such time as marriage opened the way to having an establishment of his own. In this earlier period the journeyman had every reasonable expectation of becoming a master. The wages he received above his bed and board would usually enable him to marry and set up shop in a couple of years. If he had money and could marry sooner there was nothing to prevent him from becoming a master.

In all these statements it has been assumed that the craft consisted primarily of men. There were several crafts in Paris that were composed almost entirely of women. This was unusual, however, and became even less usual later. When women were admitted to membership in a craft their position differed in no respect from that of the men. Widows frequently carried on their husbands' business, and a small number of women were to be found on the rolls of the crafts at all times. This occasional presence of women does not constitute a special problem.

All the fundamental aspects of craft industry emerged in France before the members of the craft acquired the privileges that made them gilds. The gild was a political and administrative organization of the

Journeymen  
and masters

Women in  
industry

Origins of gilds

craft. The discussion of the origins of the craft gilds is obscured by the ambiguity of the term and the persistent tendency of many writers to minimize the importance of the unorganized groups of craft-workers which were notably developed in the early period in the French towns and remained a significant feature of life in the provinces until a very late period. For a variety of reasons the free craft (*métier libre*) was more significant in France than in Germany or England, and as France was if anything the leading industrial country of the medieval period, it is perhaps justifiable to stress these divergences of national history. The relative importance of free and chartered crafts is obviously of moment in any discussions of origins, and it must be clear that the origin of the chartered craft, or gild, presents a historical problem that differs in many respects from the problems connected with the rise of the free crafts. There can be little serious question of Roman or primitive Teutonic elements in the statutes and charters of the privileged gilds that begin to appear in the twelfth century. The charters or statutes were granted by authorities that had no connections with the remote past, and their purposes were so obviously spontaneous that no distant origins can be significantly called in question. If, on the other hand, attention is concentrated on the craft groups, which certainly persisted throughout the period of the invasions, one must needs hesitate before denying the possible significance of Roman survivals or of Teutonic fraternal organizations.

The free craft was a voluntary association of individual craftsmen, without legal authority of any kind. The hierarchy of masters, journeymen, and apprentices might exist: there might be a considerable body of customs and usages. But the officers of the free craft, if there were any, had no authority to enforce the customs of the craft. Such institutions must needs have been a spontaneous growth. No single, mechanical account of their origin can be adequate, but it is part of the spontaneity of growth that many elements of the past should be incorporated in the new order, though given different meanings in

The free craft

the new combination. Such organizations doubtless represent the fusion of many elements. One must anticipate likewise many diversities of form and divergent purposes. The early history of craft organization is thus dominated by tendencies toward spontaneous variation rather than by definiteness of form, though the forms which ultimately develop become even excessively rigid and fixed. It is for this reason unsatisfactory to take refuge in the easy solution of perplexities by refusing to consider anything but gild charters and statutes. The purposes that underlie these charters can be understood only in terms of the vague voluntary organization that preceded them.

The history of Paris affords special opportunities for observing the transition from the free craft to the privileged craft with statutes. The *Book of the Crafts*, made at the instance of Etienne Boileau, the Provost of Paris, is not a collection of statutes; it was designed to be no more than a record of customs, though the process of record-making did in most cases give a somewhat different significance to the usages recorded. The preparation of the record is in itself evidence of consciousness of the need of some change. The authority to enforce regulations was vested in the Provost of Paris, an official whose jurisdiction included both civil and criminal offenses. The *Book* was designed to facilitate the regulation of the crafts, and it was to this end that the members of each craft were called to the town hall and required to state the customs of their craft. In the course of proceedings provision was made for the appointment of wardens in a number of crafts in which no wardens had previously existed. Such officers were charged with the enforcement of the rules of the craft, and the emergence of a group of sworn wardens is the most indicative evidence of the transition from the vague organization of the free craft to the more strictly ordered gild or sworn craft (*métier juré*). The wardens were charged with the exercise of a portion of the authority of the Provost; service was an obligation that was in a measure burdensome to the individuals named, but the right to elect

Acquisition of  
privileges

The sworn  
craft

wardens was a privilege that might mean much to a craft, as it practically transferred to the members of the craft as a body the administrative authority of the Provost. Certain monopolistic features were inevitably associated with this autonomy of administration, so that the attempt to use members of the craft as assistants in the administration of craft rules led gradually to the creation of privileged bodies with appreciable grants of administrative power.

The entire process of development is suggested by the diversity of conditions that is recorded in the *Book of the Crafts*. In the case of twenty-five crafts no reference is made to wardens. In some cases <sup>Wardens</sup> reference is made to "prud-hommes" and, as the term is used both in a general sense and in the technical sense of "warden," these references may be to wardens whose appointment or election was so well established by custom that no detailed reference was made. The majority of crafts in this group of twenty-five, however, were very small, according to the numbers given in the tax-roll of 1292. There were eight master wire-drawers enumerated in the tax-roll, divided into two crafts, drawers of iron wire and drawers of brass wire. When called before the Provost to state their customs, the drawers of brass wire petitioned to be exempted from the burden of having wardens. There were few masters and they were all very poor. It was suggested that the Provost have all the masters swear to observe the customs of the craft. In a few cases there were important crafts that had no wardens, but it would seem unwise to draw such cases in question. Our information may be defective, or there may have been some special reason that made it advisable for the Provost to supervise the craft directly.

In most cases the technical character of the regulations made it essential for the Provost to utilize the craft knowledge of the masters. Thus the more considerable crafts all have wardens: in twenty-nine <sup>Choice of wardens</sup> crafts, appointed at the pleasure of the Provost; in two or three cases, appointed by the Provost, with the approval of the craft; in seventeen crafts, freely elected by the craft.



There is no evident basis for the discrimination between the crafts. On the whole, the older and more important crafts were allowed to elect their wårdens, but there were exceptions. The brewers, the regraters of bread, the dyers, and the sword-grinders were all old crafts of some considerable importance, but they had appointed wardens. Apparently there was not a little caprice manifested in the grants of privilege, as in the enforcement of many general regulations. Keeping the city watch was a general obligation, which crafts-men must needs share with other citizens, but a number of crafts were entirely exempt, and the number of excuses that might be given varied considerably among the crafts. The fiscal obligations of the crafts varied capriciously. The medieval administrator had no conception of uniformity of rule, nor any consciousness that administration of justice without respect of persons was either desirable or attainable. There were few privileges that might not be had for a consideration, and craft privileges were at various periods a lucrative source of revenue to the Government. There is little reason, however, to suppose that there was much downright buying of privileges in Paris at the close of the thirteenth century.

Conditions among the crafts noted above represent the significance of political and administrative factors in the transformation of free crafts into privileged gilds.

Feudal  
influences

There is, however, a group of crafts closely associated with the royal household which developed under notably different conditions. Eberstadt, E. Bourgeois, and some other writers have been moved by these and similar circumstances in some other towns to call attention to the importance of the feudal background. Eberstadt, who has become most closely associated with this theory, unfortunately writes with little caution and tends to overstate his case. Bourgeois is more careful, and presents the so-called feudal view of the origin of crafts in its most acceptable form.

The large establishments of the great lords sheltered many craftsmen and became the scene of further specialization of occupations at a fairly early date. The service of the kitchen

was elaborately organized for reasons that are obvious. The establishment required much craft service of smiths, garment-makers, shoemakers, masons, and builders. The crafts which were earliest to emerge, and many that persisted through the period of disorder, found shelter in the households of feudal lords. Both at Paris and at Blois there is clear evidence that the development of a number of crafts was profoundly influenced by the presence of the royal household.

The crafts  
of the feudal  
household

The royal  
household

The situation is no doubt exceptional in some respects, but it is at least indicative of the variety of administrative arrangements that makes it so difficult to generalize about any aspect of medieval law or custom. The former dependence of these crafts upon the royal household survived in two respects; there was an obligation to pay special fees to the King, or to some persons designated by the King, and there was more or less complete subjection to the supervisory authority of some official of the royal household.

The King's marshal had complete jurisdiction over the many iron-working crafts that developed out of the plain forge work; blacksmiths, hook- and hasp-makers, helmet-makers, gimlet-makers, edge-tool-makers, locksmiths and cutlers were all obliged to purchase of the Marshal the right to exercise the craft. After the general admission fee had been paid there was a special fee to be paid for the right to work at home, and another fee for the right to work away from home. The King's Marshal appointed six wardens to enforce the customs of these crafts. Any infringements were punished by fines which were paid to the Marshal. In case of refusal to obey the orders of the Marshal, the offender might be forbidden to exercise his craft, and in case of persistence in disobedience the Marshal might tear down the offender's forge. The cutlers and locksmiths were obliged to pay fees to the Marshal for the right to exercise their craft, but they were under the general authority of the Provost of Paris. The bakers were subject to the authority of the Chief Bread-Maker (Grand Pannétier), though they had the right to elect twelve wardens and seem to have enjoyed some



measure of autonomy. The King's Cook had jurisdiction over the freshwater fishermen. A special group of fishermen, however, were subject to the discretion of one Guerin Dubois, "to whose ancestors Philip the King gave this right." The said Dubois sold the right to fish in the waters described for such prices as he chose. The old-clothes merchants were subject to the discretion of the Maître Chambrier, who seems to have been Chief Groom of the Bedchamber. Leather-workers, both shoemakers and saddlers, were under the authority of the King's Chamberlain, though the proceeds collected from the sale of permits to exercise the craft were divided between the Chamberlain and the Count of Eu. The revenue from a group of five other leather-working crafts went to a private individual "who had been given the crafts" by the King. Masons and plasterers were supervised by the Master Mason who was appointed by the King to hold office during pleasure. The masons were not obliged to pay any fees, but they enjoyed no autonomy.

The wood-working crafts, at the time of Etienne Boileau, were under the authority of the King's Master Carpenter.

The carpenters In 1313 general complaints prepared by the craftsmen against the Master Carpenter resulted in a hearing at the Parlement (court of administrative and civil law) and in the suppression of the office. The authority over the crafts passed naturally to the Provost of Paris and in the course of the century several of the wood-working crafts received statutes. The general craft of carpentry, confined at last to a much-narrowed scope of work by the process of subdivision, finally received statutes toward the close of the fifteenth century. The incident is significant because it illustrates all stages of the process of transition from a craft sheltered and dominated by the royal household to a craft with privileges which made it largely autonomous.

Although the craft guilds of the later middle ages came to have a fairly definite form, it would be a mistake to suppose that this was in any respect an indication or an outcome of a common origin. The gild privileges developed in many

ways. Such generality of form as came to exist was primarily due to the pressure of the economic needs of an industrial and commercial life that presented many fundamental elements of similarity despite the diversities of political forms in national and municipal life. There was a tendency to make similar regulations, and the attainment of common ends led to the creation of devices which were similar in general outline. The technical processes were largely similar, the conditions of merchandising were substantially the same in all countries. The larger outlines of craft life were thus common to the crafts of all the larger European cities, and, as our knowledge is frequently incomplete, we tend to see only these general features. Close contact with the problems of medieval industry will usually force upon one's attention the persistent variety of medieval arrangements; much of this diversity is no doubt mere difference in detail, but there is sufficient variation to make one cautious of generalization.

Diversities  
of gild  
development

The character of craft life is depicted with some clearness of outline in the statutes and customs of the crafts, though the picture is in many respects more nearly akin to a photographic negative than to the finished print. Many aspirations are expressed in these documents which show by sheer dint of repetition that the intention was not wholly realized. Masters kept more apprentices than they should. Shoddy and fraudulent work were common at all times and in all towns. It was difficult to confine the various crafts to the tasks and work which properly speaking belonged to them. One is inclined to believe that the idyllic pictures of medieval industrial life are based on reading craft statutes and customs as literal records of what was done. It is necessary to remember that we are dealing with a period whose profession of faith was eloquent, though its practice of virtue was qualified by all too human weakness.

Ideal and  
actual craft life

Craft statutes are concerned with three kinds of matters: definitions of the civil obligations of the members, definitions of the status of the different classes of workers, and regulations of a technical industrial

Content of  
craft statutes

character. The civil obligations of members of a craft involved various matters of fees: fees due the King or municipality with reference to the exercise of the craft; fees connected with the sale of the manufactured wares or the purchase of raw materials. The keeping of the city watch was likewise the subject of many clauses, especially the matter of excuses. Some crafts were entirely exempted, but in all cases certain excuses were a valid means of escape from duty on any particular night. The old-clothes merchants recited a long list of proper excuses, when they came before Boileau: age, the condition of the wife, their annual bleeding, or absence from the city of which notice had been given. They went on to say that the wardens ought to accept excuses when sent in by a neighbor or journeyman, but they required all excuses to be delivered by the wife in person "whether beautiful or homely, young or old, strong or weak. And it is wholly shameful and improper for a woman to come and wait around at the Châtelet until the hour of guard mount, requiring her return home through the streets of a city like Paris, with her son or daughter, or perhaps with no escort at all."

The definition of the status of the different members of the craft included, in general, statement of the conditions of apprenticeship, the mutual obligations of apprentices and master, the rights and duties of journeymen, and the qualifications required of masters. Regulations of this class became very detailed in the late period in all countries. In early statutes or customs there are few regulations. The general tenor of the regulations of apprenticeship in the *Book of the Crafts* seems to favor the apprentice. The restrictions seem designed to insure honest instruction in the craft. To this end it is provided that no new master shall take an apprentice during the first year; that the widow of a deceased master shall take no apprentice, though she may continue to exercise the craft. The restrictions on numbers are expressly declared to be designed to insure good teaching, as a master could not give any significant attention to many apprentices. The weavers required that proposals for apprenticeship be submitted to the

Development  
of regulations  
of status:  
apprentices

wardens, who might refuse to allow the contract to be concluded, if in their judgment the master was not capable of discharging all his obligations. The minimum duration of apprenticeship was usually fixed at six years, though as many as eleven years were required in some crafts. In a few crafts only three years were required. The statutes of the goldsmiths provided that apprenticeship should end when the individual was capable of earning one hundred sous per year in excess of his board, but this is an isolated case. Fagniez says that, to his knowledge, it is the only case in which the length of the period of apprenticeship was dependent upon the proficiency of the apprentice. One must remember that, for the most part, sons of masters were not required to comply with the provisions of apprenticeship. The regulations applied in their rigor only to persons not born to the craft.

The status of the journeyman at the close of the thirteenth century was not rigidly defined. The constant references in the *Book of the Crafts* to the direct promotion of apprentices to the grade of master show that <sup>Journeyman</sup> the transitory status of journeyman was not universally observed. Even in the later period, sons of masters could dispense with the term of service as journeymen, and, at this time, the practice seems to have been general. Lack of funds must have been the chief factor in forcing workmen to serve a term as journeymen. The journeyman was not supposed to hire himself out to any but masters of the craft, and it was irregular for him to work on his own account. When he lived with the master, it would be obviously difficult for him to work outside the shop without detection, but when he found his own lodgings many opportunities for independent work presented themselves, especially when there was much wage-work in the craft that could be done on the premises of the customer. The obligation to work for a master thus constituted the most distinctive feature of the status of the journeyman. Frequently, the journeyman was not supposed to participate in any way in the sale of wares at the weekly market, but that restriction was not universal.

The conditions of becoming a master at the time of Étienne Boileau were hedged about with few formalities. Most of the customs say that any one may become a master "who knows the craft and has the wherewithal." The requirement of adequate means to support the obligations of the master was perhaps more rigidly enforced than at a later date. The hose-makers reported that thirty-five of their number had fallen into poverty and become journeymen. It may be that the statement merely means that they had been obliged to hire themselves out to other masters of the craft, and so were working as if they were journeymen. One must needs assume that they went into the shops of other masters, not even having the means to do work at their own homes. Later, the terms "master" and "journeyman" implied a definite status. The master could not cease to be a master, even if he became poor. Doubtless, at this early period the terms were hardly more than descriptive phrases. There is no evidence of any formal ceremony of admission to the grade of master. The special test of craft skill, the masterpiece, is mentioned only once in the *Book of the Crafts*, and in that single case in no technical connection. Apparently the masters were examined or made to swear that they knew the craft, and of the two modes of inquiry the latter seems to have been the more common. This would not have led to the admission of unskilled workers. The elaboration of the later requirements for the mastership was not necessary from the point of view of testing craft skill. The attempt to limit the number of craft-workers by complicated conditions of admission to mastership was one of the most arbitrary of the various monopolistic practices of which the privileged crafts were guilty. In the crafts that still remained subject to direct royal authority, certain fees had to be paid, and all masters were frequently required to swear that they would observe the statutes of the craft.

The oldest portion of the customs of the crafts is that concerned with the regulations of the technical processes of the craft and its relation to other crafts. The first objects of these regulations were to prevent care-

Masters

Unfair  
competition



less workmanship and unfair competition. In the crafts whose market was purely local bad workmanship injured the consumer, and at times injured the honest workmen by enabling their unscrupulous neighbor to undersell them with inferior goods. Frauds in manufacture were more serious in the crafts which were devoted to the export trade, because all the goods were marked with the name of the town and sold as such. The goods of individual masters were only incompletely distinguished at best. A number of dishonest masters could thus injure the trade of the town as a whole, and there was a disheartening amount of dishonesty. The inspection of goods with which the wardens were charged was therefore a matter of great importance. The craft statutes endeavored to create standards of manufacture. The raw materials that should be used were definitely stated. The use of inferior materials was prohibited. In crafts which required close attention to the work, night work was forbidden.

With the increase of occupational specialization the delimitation of the activities proper to each craft became important. The cobblers were thus prohibited from making new shoes. Dyers were not allowed to do any fulling, and it was only as a concession that the woolen weavers were allowed to dye in other colors than blue. The old-clothes dealers were allowed to mend old garments, but were not supposed to compete with the tailors in the making of new garments. Specialization had been carried far enough by the close of the thirteenth century to require some of these niceties in the delimitation of spheres of activity, but this type of difficulty became much more pronounced later.

There are some traces of an element of communism. Masters were at times required to share advantageous purchases with each other. Such regulations, however, were rare.

In the records of the customs of particular crafts there is much caprice. The early records are particularly erratic and incomplete. Much of this lack of system in the writing-down of customs was due no doubt to the casual manner in which most of these records were made. Usually some spe-

cific occasion required the making of the record, and, as is natural, the matters of moment with reference to the current events exercised an undue influence on the character of the record. The caprice of external events, too, exerted a great influence upon the date at which privileges were granted to crafts. Many aspects of craft life and craft development, therefore, admit of no satisfactory explanation. Forms of organization were seldom rigidly defined, and the growth is systematic only in a very general sense.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE POPULATION OF ENGLAND: 1086-1700

#### I

OUR knowledge of population during the middle ages is incomplete and unsatisfactory. There were no comprehensive enumerations of population for any entire country until the beginnings of census work toward the close of the eighteenth century. In particular towns and in some provinces enumerations were made at various times, and in France a comprehensive enumeration was attempted toward the close of the seventeenth century, but these enterprises were not carried out with much statistical precision, so that the results are hardly superior to the estimates obtained by other means. Estimates of population are based on two types of material: enumerations of families, property-holders, or adults for purposes of taxation; and the registers of births, marriages, and deaths. Both of these sources are subject to errors of omission and to errors in estimating the proportion of the enumerated population to the total number of persons. The proportions of families, adults over fourteen, marriages, births, and deaths to the total population are all constants within a small margin of uncertainty, but the range of possible variation is sufficient to exert a significant influence upon results. If the families in a rural community are comprehensively enumerated, the population could nowadays be estimated at about four and one half times the number of families, but it is not entirely safe to assume that this proportion would be true of a medieval population. The ecclesiastics were then more numerous and would not be represented in the count of families. It is also more than possible that more servants were kept than at the present time. The most serious element of difficulty, however, is the likelihood of omissions. The lists available for the earlier medieval period are tax-lists, so that there would be

motives enough for omissions of many kinds. The very poor were frequently omitted entirely because the tax would not fall upon them directly. Some of the well-to-do were frequently able to keep their names off the rolls, or were for some reason exempt. It is not possible to 'secure' any accurate knowledge of the absolute numbers of the population.

For the more general purposes of the economist it is sufficient to secure some conception of the relative changes in the mass and density of population. It is important to know whether there was a steady growth throughout the period or mere fluctuations attributable to the vicissitudes of war and disease. Our experience of the growth of population during the nineteenth century has made us prone to assume that a progressive increase of population is the normal condition of a European country, but it is not at all clear that Europe has differed as widely from Eastern countries as is frequently supposed, and there seems reason to believe that the movement of population in England presents a marked contrast to the general changes of population on the continent of Europe during the period. In England there seems to have been more of a steady growth of population; in France, population has fluctuated, tending to approximate what we may call the normal density for the country, though frequently below that figure because of various calamities. These at least are the conclusions that may be drawn from the figures presented in Tables I and II, and there is no ground for supposing that there is sufficient error in the figures to impair the validity of the general conclusion.

It will be observed that the population of France reached a mean density of about one hundred persons to the square mile early in the fourteenth century. Pestilence and wars reduced the population, but it tended to recover. The figures for 1581 are not very satisfactory, but those for 1700 and 1715 suggest pretty clearly that such decrease of population as occurred during the period following 1328 can legitimately be ascribed to calamities. The decrease between 1700 and 1715 is known to be due to the dearth of 1709-10 and the

TABLE I

## THE POPULATION OF ENGLAND: 1086-1801

*Total number of persons and mean density per square mile*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Total persons</i>	<i>Mean density</i>
1086.....	1,800,000	35.38
1327.....	2,225,000	43.73
1377.....	2,500,000	49.14
1570.....	3,882,000	76.31
1600.....	4,460,000	87.67
1630.....	5,225,000	102.70
1670.....	5,395,000	106.00
1700.....	5,653,000	111.10
1750.....	6,066,000	119.20
1801.....	8,331,000	163.70

TABLE II

## THE POPULATION OF FRANCE TO 1789

*Total number of persons and mean density per square mile (the boundaries of 1871-1914 are assumed)*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Total Persons</i>	<i>Mean density</i>
Prior to Roman conquest.....	6,700,000	32.35
Ninth century.....	5,500,000	26.55
1328.....	22,000,000	106.20
1581.....	20,000,000	96.60
1700.....	21,136,000	102.00
1715.....	18,000,000	86.90
1770.....	24,500,000	116.00
1789.....	26,000,000	125.00

losses in the military campaigns of the period. A population of about one hundred persons to the square mile would represent the normal possibilities of adequate maintenance in view of the agricultural technique of the period. Assuming the crops and methods of culture characteristic of the middle ages, a population of that degree of density could provide for its essential needs without relying upon any systematic importation of grain or other foods. Knowing as we do that few regions of Europe were regularly importing food, this assumption is wholly in accord with medieval conditions. Industrial development was primarily dependent upon agricultural resources. Industry flourished upon the basis afforded by a local agricultural surplus,

Normal density

and was thus definitely subordinate in importance to agriculture. When the Industrial Revolution introduced changes in technique which made it possible to develop great concentration of population in the proximity of mineral deposits, densities of population greater than one hundred per square mile began to appear in notable sections of England and Europe. Until the Industrial Revolution this figure of one hundred persons to the square mile represents about the normal density for Europe. The Low Countries were perhaps an exception to this statement, as they received appreciable quantities of grain from the Baltic countries.

The figures for the mean density of population in England show that the agricultural resources of England were not fully utilized until the seventeenth century, and that England was relatively under-populated until the eve of the Industrial Revolution. The continuity of growth of population in England is thus due to this emergence of significantly new factors in economic development when the limits possible under the old technique had been reached. The beginning of dependence upon the importation of grain shortly after 1750 affords striking confirmation of the substantial accuracy of the estimates of normal density. Some improvement was taking place in agricultural technique, but even such added possibilities did not make it possible to maintain a population of much more than one hundred to the square mile. France remained substantially self-sufficing in the production of food, and the mean density of population shows no increase such as took place in England. The increase of population in France could be explained by the remarkable improvements in the technique of agriculture.

It must be remembered that this conception of normal density is purely relative; a fact emphatically suggested by comparison between Europe and the Orient, especially rice-producing countries. Statistics are available for British India, and, though there are many elements of uncertainty, it is fairly clear that the great density of population in the most fertile provinces, six

Medieval  
England under-  
populated

Normal  
densities in  
the Orient

hundred to the square mile, is not to be attributed solely or even primarily to a low standard of living. Good arable land constitutes a somewhat larger proportion of the total area than is usual in Europe, and this is of course of importance. The great factor in the high density of population, however, is the dependence upon rice. Rice responds more significantly than wheat to intensive culture. Wheat yields between 530 and 1800 pounds per acre, according to the cultural system: rice yields between 820 and 4500 pounds per acre. The food value of rice is perhaps slightly lower than that of wheat, but a rice-growing region can nevertheless maintain a greater density of population than a wheat-growing region. The proportion is indicated roughly by the quantity of land that can be effectively cultivated by one man and his <sup>Peasant</sup> team. In medieval Europe it was assumed that <sup>holdings</sup> a peasant cultivator needed about thirty acres for independent maintenance of himself and his family. In British India, in the province of Bengal, between five and ten acres are sufficient to occupy the peasant and his family, not in market-gardening, but in staple agriculture. The specialized agriculture now practiced in Europe makes it difficult to institute comparisons with modern conditions, but Europe has become so dependent upon the importation of food that her own agricultural resources are no longer a measure of the density of her population. Under the influence of the Industrial Revolution the factors determining the growth of population have become so complex that it is scarcely possible to assign any precise limits to the density of population that may be achieved even in large areas.

The figures upon which the estimates of population are based are rather more satisfactory for England than for France. The English figures are in each case based upon some approximately comprehensive enumeration. The figures for France are based on enumerations, but none of them are as comprehensive as those <sup>Deficiencies</sup> available for England. The estimates for 1328 in <sup>of the French</sup> France are probably the most reliable figures we have for that <sup>figures</sup> country until the enumerations of the "Intendants" in 1700.



This is particularly fortunate, as it is rather more important to know the population at periods of greatest prosperity than in periods of distress. An enumeration of hearths was made in 1328 with reference to the levy of an armed force; the figures are comprehensive for the royal domains and thus include a large portion of the kingdom, but the population of the estates of the nobility must be assumed to have been proportionate. As the lands of the royal domain were fairly well scattered throughout the kingdom there can be little objection to projecting these figures into the non-enumerated portions of France. The chief difficulty is to determine the probable proportion between hearths and the total population; the very conservative writers multiply by four, others by four and one half or five, according to their temper. French material is so largely based on the number of hearths or families that we have no definite means of testing probable proportions by different types of enumeration, as is possible in England. The figures for France prior to 1328 are highly speculative, and the estimate for 1581 is an expression of opinion rather than a statistical result, but the general course of development does not seem to be open to much doubt. We cannot be certain of the precise figures, but we can feel confident that France was about as densely populated in the early fourteenth century as she was at any time prior to the late eighteenth century. The land of France was fully settled and utilized when the medieval civilization was at its height.

## II

The movement of population in England has been obscured by the relative uncertainty that has existed with reference to the population prior to the Black Death. In *Domesday Book* and in the roll of the poll-tax of 1377 we have for those dates much more accurate data than exist for France, but there were no collected data for the years immediately preceding the Black Death. Some writers, notably Seebohm and Gasquet, declared that England had enjoyed "great prosperity prior to the great pes-

The Black  
Death

tilence. The later visitations were sufficient in their minds to prevent any considerable increase of population between 1349 and 1377, so they were disposed to regard the figures for 1377 as indicative of the population immediately after the Black Death. It has generally been assumed that the population was decreased by one half or one third during the course of the pestilence, so that this would indicate a population of four or five millions in the years immediately preceding the pestilence. If this were true the general course of the growth of population in England would have been roughly comparable with the movement of population in France. A population of five millions in England would indicate a mean density of about one hundred to the square mile, and under such conditions it would be necessary to suppose that England was a maturely settled country.

The figure for 1327 given in the table above is based upon inferences drawn from the subsidy rolls of that year; or in the case of one county the year 1332. A sub- Subsidy  
sidy was levied in 1327 in all or nearly all the rolls, 1327  
counties, and many of the rolls for the counties are extant. These materials have attracted little attention from students of population, partly because there are no summarized results and partly because the lists are lists of property-holders rather than householders. It must be confessed that the basis is not as satisfactory as might be desired, but upon careful examination it would seem that there are no more omissions from these lists than from the other lists that are the basis of estimates of population. Furthermore, careful studies by Powell of the subsidies levied in Suffolk in 1283 afford some definite indication of the proportion between the total population and the number of persons enumerated in the subsidy rolls. The multiple six, used in the tables, is derived from this source.

The poll-tax lists which are available for 1377 and for portions of England in 1381 are subject to many omissions. They purport to enumerate the entire adult Defects of the  
population over fourteen years of age, but it is Poll-tax lists  
still necessary to compute the probable number of children



and some allowance must be made for adults not enumerated. Large numbers escaped enumeration in 1381; "escaped" is the appropriate term, as it is presumed that they took to the woods during the enumeration. As much as one fifth is added by some writers in computing from the lists of 1377 merely on account of omissions. It would seem defensible, therefore, to use the subsidy rolls of the early fourteenth century despite the fact that they do not purport to be absolutely comprehensive enumerations of adults or householders. The subsidy was a tax on property from which only the very poor were exempt; the returns are thus comparable to the returns of the Domesday Survey. Figures from five counties, enumerated in Table III, indicate a population that constituted only seventy per cent of the population of the same counties in 1377. These counties are reasonably representative, as they are well scattered and present many diversities of condition. They contained about one tenth of the population of England in 1377. Comparison with the figures from *Domesday Book* and from some other subsidy rolls shows that the population was not growing consistently. The changes in Worcestershire are especially notable. There were 50,000 persons in the county in 1280, as

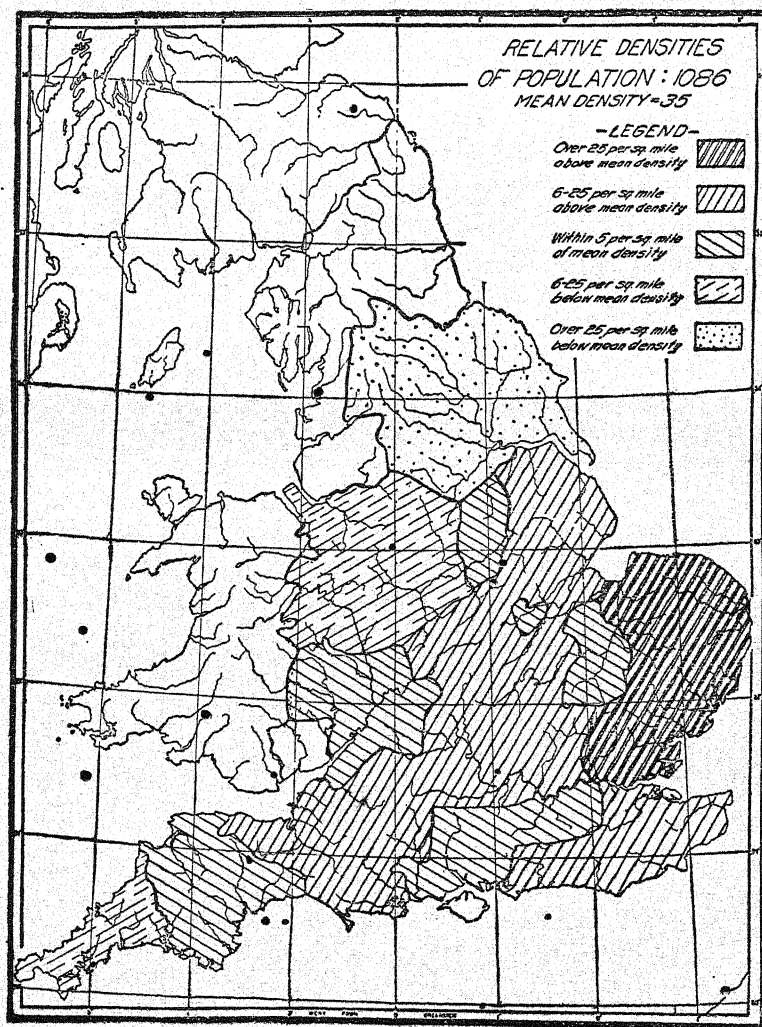
The estimate  
for 1327

compared with 27,000 in 1086 and 28,000 in 1327. These figures would not support the contention that the population of England was at its maximum just prior to the Black Death, and it is very difficult to find any grounds for assuming a population of four or five millions.

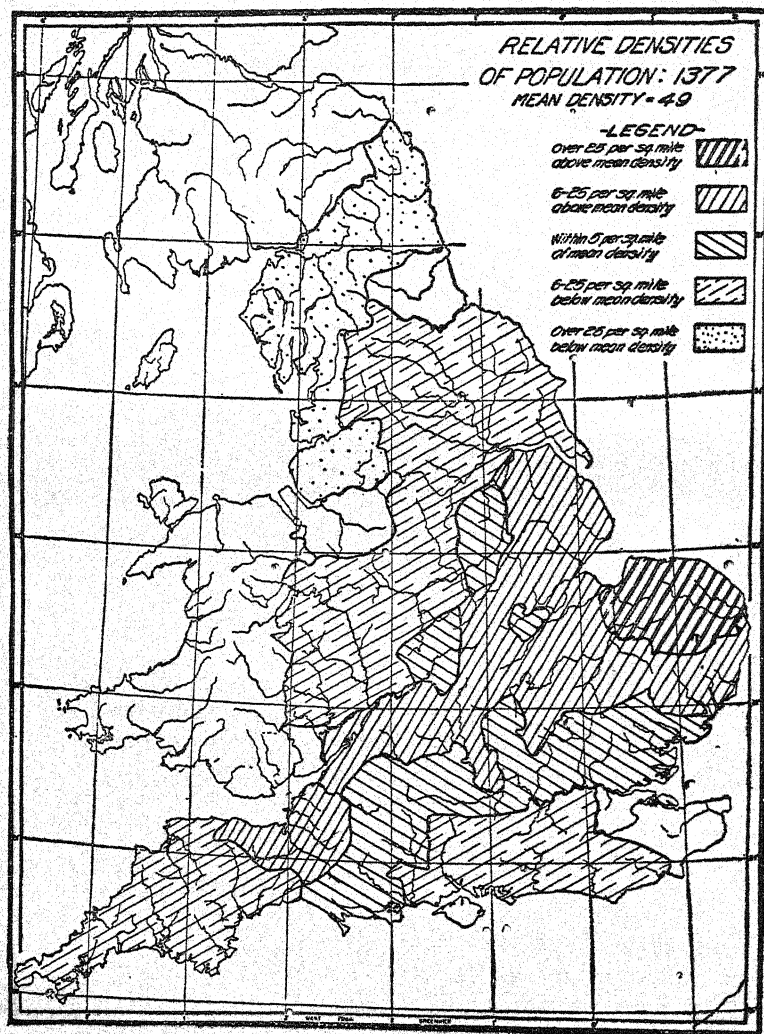
TABLE III  
CHANGES IN POPULATION: 1086, 1280, 1327, 1377

County	1086	1280-1296	1301	1327	1377
Leicester.....	40,632			26,826	50,760
Staffords.....	19,068		(1332)	21,712	35,982
Somerset.....	82,584			62,814	87,072
Sussex.....	62,460	41,244		43,278	58,310
Worcester.....	27,750	50,898		28,098	25,758
York, North Riding.....			55,332	182,728	257,882 53,097

If the figures are interpreted without prejudice, they would indicate that the population in 1327 was somewhat less considerable than in 1377, probably not as much as thirty per cent short, but definitely less than two and one half millions. The figure 2,225,000 is designed to present this opinion in round numbers, and, though it is hypothetical, it is not much more of a guess than any of the other figures.

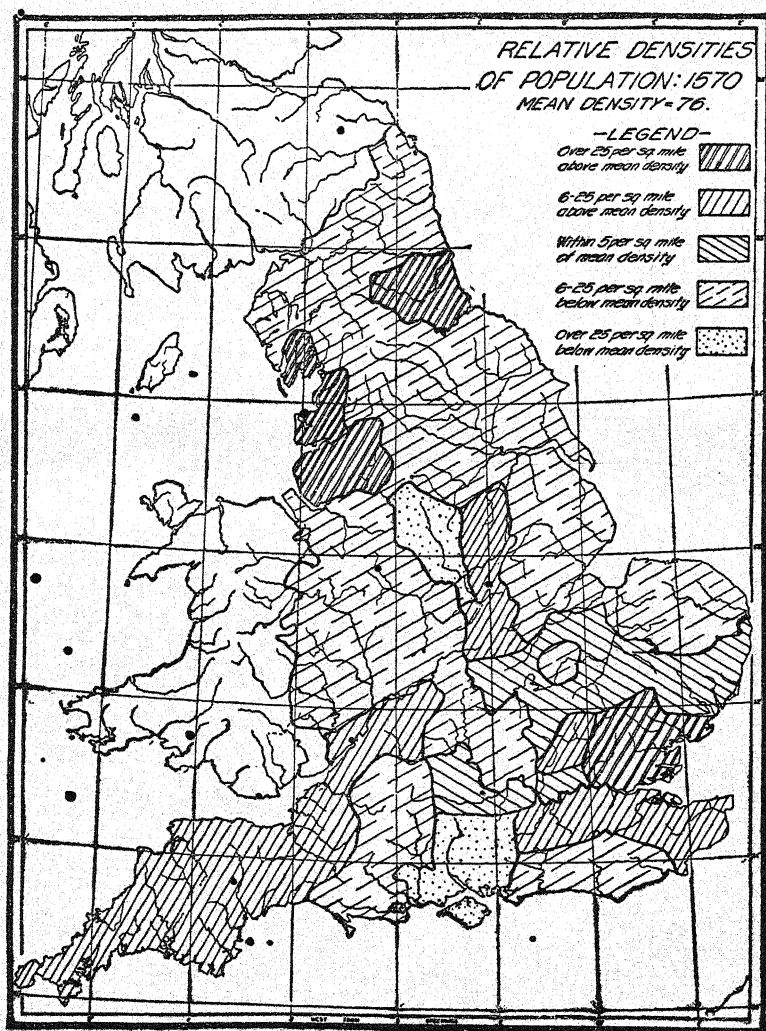


These considerations would perhaps require some modification of the views currently expressed about the mortality from the Black Death. The epidemic may perhaps have been somewhat less general or the mortality somewhat less great. At all events, the recuperation from the ravages of the disease must have been much more rapid than has been assumed by Cunningham, Seeböhm, and Gasquet. The suggestions

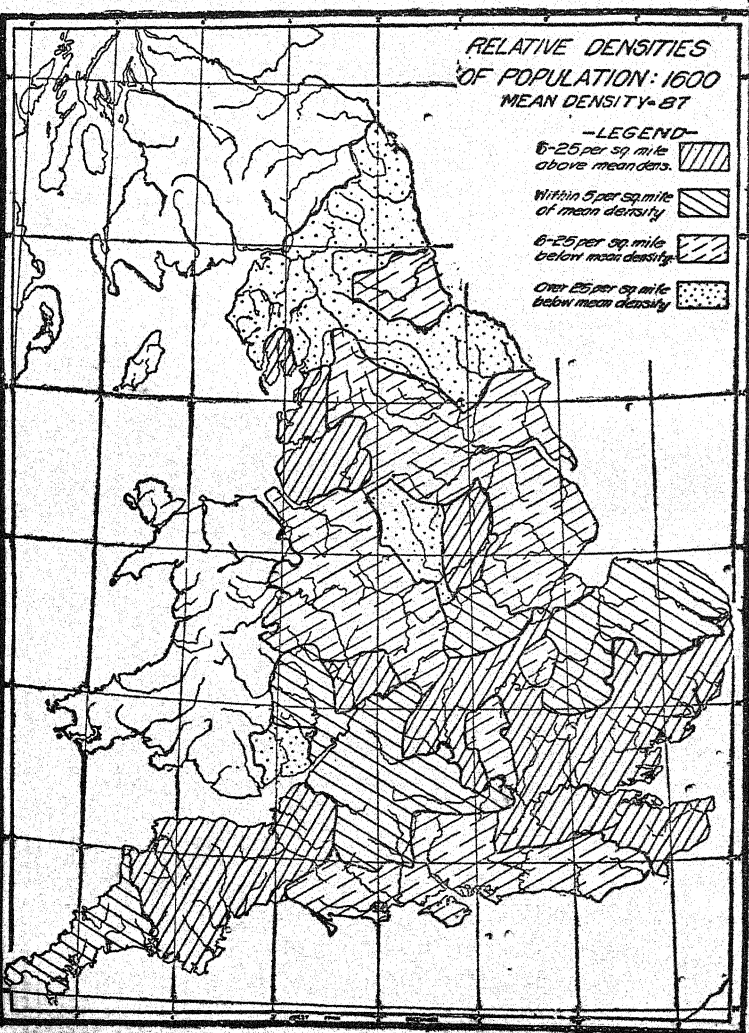


of the material in the subsidy rolls lead to about the same conclusions as those reached by Thorold Rogers from calculations based upon the food-supply. It would seem, therefore, that we have grounds for saying that the movement of population in England was distinctively different from the movement of population in France.

The study of relative changes of population in the various

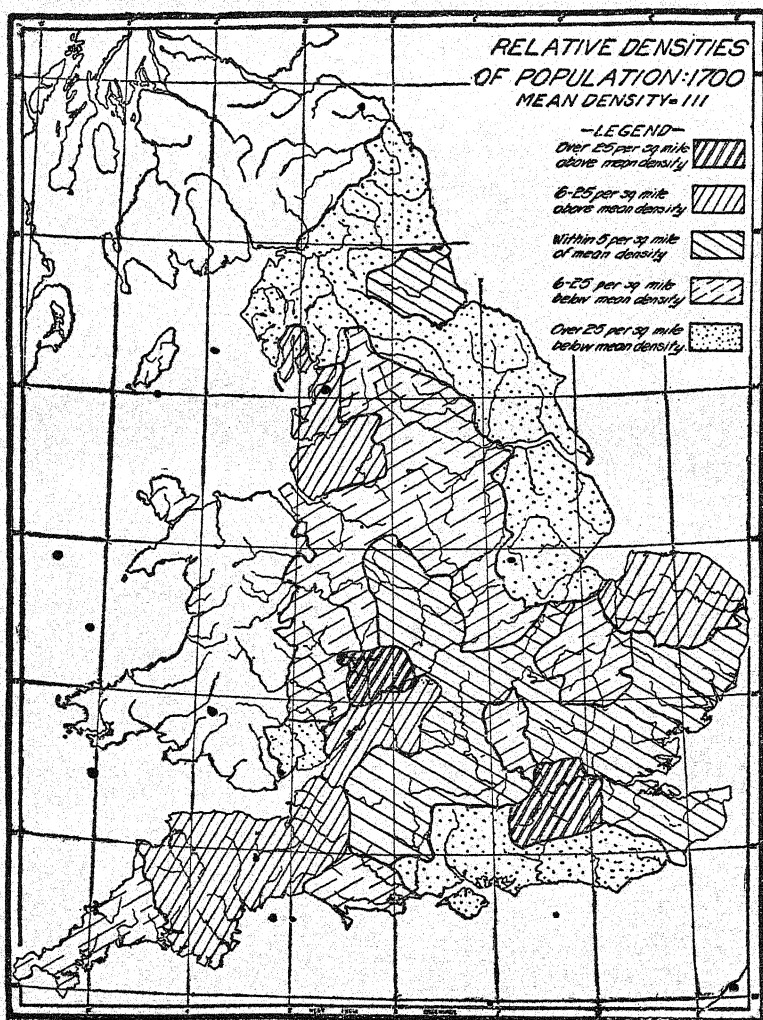


counties is fully as significant as the study of totals for England as a whole. In some respects there is less likelihood of distortion of results by reason of general statistical errors, for we have no grounds for supposing that errors were localized by counties. Furthermore, a considerable margin is afforded by the mode of presentation that must be adopted in studying density fig-





ures by counties. In some cases small differences might throw a particular county into a higher class or lower class. The figures for York in 1086 are low because of the devastation of the county shortly before the survey. Durham is set down for what would seem to be a very excessive figure in 1570. With these exceptions there is no ground for assuming that the figures for any particular county are seriously defective.



The maps showing the relative density of population have been shaded to represent the relation of the density in particular counties to the mean density of population in England as a whole. It is thus possible to compare the conditions at the various dates. Changes in relative density can be studied apart from the general growth of population. Counties whose population was not more than five persons per square mile above or below the mean density for all England constitute the basic group, representing approximately the mean density. As this group of counties is to serve primarily as a basis the range of variation has been made small. Deviation from this mean density is indicated in four groups: more than twenty-five persons per square mile above the mean; between six and twenty-five persons more than the mean density; between six and twenty-five persons per square mile less than the mean density; and more than twenty-five persons less than the mean density. The total range of variation thus indicated is on the whole greater than would be found in a maturely settled country prior to the Industrial Revolution.

The maps reveal a fairly definite movement of population westward and northward. At the time of the Domesday Survey, the population was most dense in the eastern counties. There was a great belt of mid-land counties in which the density exceeded the mean density for England, and on the frontiers of Scotland and Wales very low densities. Some of the border counties were not enumerated at all, but allowance has been made for their population in calculating the mean density. The relative concentration in the eastern counties gradually disappears; population does not decline absolutely, but the growth in those counties is not as rapid. By 1600 the population had become fairly well distributed throughout England. In no county was there a population that exceeded the mean density by more than twenty-five persons to the square mile; the counties showing such excess over the mean density in 1570 had passed the mark by very small margins, and there is considerable reason to doubt the figure for Durham in 1570. The



map for 1600 thus indicates the close of the first phase of the development of settlement in England; there was a mean density of 87 persons to the square mile and population was rather evenly diffused. In the seventeenth century the beginnings of the modern massing of the population are evident. The metropolitan area of London began to show up conspicuously, and Worcestershire marks the beginnings of the manufacturing districts of the west. Lancashire shows a high density, but not as much above the mean for all England as in 1600. The map for this period is probably typical for a maturely settled country prior to the Industrial Revolution. There is a clear distinction between counties whose interests were purely agricultural, and the counties combining agriculture with manufactures. Norfolk, Gloucestershire, Wilts, and Devon were the principal textile counties. Worcestershire combined textiles and metals. The textile industries of Suffolk, Essex, and Kent had declined and they had become more largely agricultural counties.

The changes that are suggested by these maps can hardly be explained except in terms of the migration and differential growth that would naturally be seen in the transition from a sparsely settled frontier to a maturely settled country in which the relative density of settlement is closely adapted to the agricultural and industrial advantages of the various portions of the total area. The massing of population in 1086 represented a preliminary stage in settlement in which the coasts were more densely settled because of their proximity to the influences of the Continent. Immigration from the Continent affected these counties more than the midlands and new industrial processes thus established themselves in these counties earlier than elsewhere. The map of 1086 can thus be explained by the history of settlement. The map of 1700, on the other hand, represents the relative advantages of the different sections of England. The study of the density of population by counties tends to confirm the conclusions suggested by the study of total population and mean density. We may reasonably con-

ceive England to have been sparsely populated in the middle ages, much less densely populated than the Low Countries and France. England, to use Mackinder's apt phrase, was a frontier province of Europe.

England was acted upon by a diversity of European influences, and for this reason the history of England must be studied with a European background. Many English institutions were imported from the Continent. In economic concerns England was likewise a passive subject. Her industrial and commercial life in this early period was dominated by Continental influences. The woolen industry developed under the stimulus of the French and Flemish technique. New methods and products were in no case introduced by the English industries of this period. The progress of manufacture thus follows the advance in Europe after an interval that is at times considerable. Not until 1700 was the general position of English industries wholly comparable as regards technique with the similar industries on the Continent.

The Industrial Revolution thus brought about a great change in the relative positions of England and the Continental countries. England ceased to be a mere frontier province and became the leading exponent of Western civilization, both in the initiation of new technique and in the dissemination of European influences in the Orient and in the New World.

### III

The period prior to the Industrial Revolution also presents a marked contrast with modern conditions with respect to the relative proportions of urban to rural population. In the early period towns were small and in general the population was widely scattered in villages and hamlets. Dispersion was characteristic of this period, just as concentration is characteristic of the modern period. There is thus a difference in the relation of the population to the soil as well as some difference in the actual mass of the population. Although the population of France in

the nineteenth century was not very much greater than in the early fourteenth century, the aspect of the countryside was different. A different form of social organization had grown up which emphasized the town, and especially the great metropolis, at the expense of the small rural communes. We are so familiar with the more elaborately organized massing of the population that we are slow to realize how large a population can be maintained when widely dispersed. This is a feature of medieval life that is particularly difficult for us to reconstruct imaginatively.

There is sufficient evidence in the Domesday Survey to enable us to form fairly definite impressions of the size of settlements, but the statistics have not as yet been tabulated for any considerable number of counties. Professor Vinogradoff has worked over the surveys of Derbyshire and Essex, which are fairly typical counties. Derbyshire Two counties in 1086 showed a density that was only slightly under the mean density for England, while Essex was one of the most densely populated counties. The counties also represent somewhat different types of settlement in other respects.

The two counties [says Vinogradoff] may be taken as interesting examples of the repartition of population in the midlands and in the southern counties. At the same time the Danish element is strongly represented in Derbyshire without being predominant there, while Essex, though substantially akin to Hertfordshire and Sussex, yet has many features in common with the East Anglian settlement, and especially Suffolk, from which it is divided by the slight demarcation line of the Stour. In regard to the soil and contour of the country, the two shires in question present marked contrast; hills and dales are characteristic of Derbyshire, plains and marshes of Essex.

Turning to the northern county, we naturally find a population more scattered, and concentrated as a rule into smaller groups. It is true that in some cases a rural organization described under one name in *Domesday* may in truth have consisted of several members only loosely connected with each other. But although this element of uncertainty cannot be eliminated, it is not unreasonable to assume that the single place name points to a nucleated settlement of some sort, as the record is careful to notice over and over again the subdivision of rural units. . . .

The best way seems to be to group the settlements according to the number of villein and soc-man households assigned to them. The villeins and soc-men were the principal classes of rural tenantry, and held among them the regular shares of the field holdings, while bordarii and cotters came in as small tenants of a few acres or of cottages, and had better be left aside in a review of the main features of the village settlements.<sup>1</sup>

The number of households of villeins and soc-men would represent roughly one sixth of the total population. Vinogradoff suggests grouping settlements of 2 to 5 households (under thirty persons), 6 to 11 households (36 to 66 persons), and over 12 households (over 72 persons). These groupings may seem to emphasize unduly the very small settlements, but there were so few that were larger that separate classification would scarcely be necessary. In Derbyshire there were only 6 or 7 villages of 30 or more households, so that the classification as a large village of any settlement having more than 12 households is definitely justifiable. In Essex, there were 19 villages with 40 or more households: one village had 143 households, the other 18 ranged in size between 40 and 80, few of them having more than 60 households. The proportions of the total population living within these various types of settlement were as follows:

	Derby per cent	Essex per cent
Hamlets, 2-5 households.....	9	9.4
Small villages, 6-11 households.....	35	36.9
Large villages, over 12 households.....	57	73.1
	91	99.0

The portion of the population of Derby that was not classified cannot be assumed to be distributed in larger units; the impossibility of making the classification complete is due merely to the difficulty of placing the unclassified entries within the designated groups. "Boroughs" are omitted, but, as will be seen later, the Domesday borough was not distinguishable from the villages in respect to size. With rare exceptions there was no urban population: no groupings

<sup>1</sup> Vinogradoff, P., *English Society in the Eleventh Century*, 269.

of population sufficiently large or dependent upon commerce and industry as distinct from agriculture to admit of separate classification. The population was exclusively rural.

The subsidy rolls of the early fourteenth century afford further evidence of the relation of population to the soil. The classifications must be changed slightly, if the division into groups is to bear any relation to the relative numbers of villages of the various sizes. The <sup>Villages in 1327</sup> somewhat larger figures, however, cannot be assumed to indicate that the settlements were as large as indicated. In the tax-rolls we seem to be dealing with areas rather than with final units of settlement, and at times two or three villages are explicitly grouped. Casual phrases, too, suggest that various scattered farms were included in the enumeration under the caption of a neighboring village. We may be sure that the settlements were not larger. But even when all these allowances have been made, it seems clear that there were more large villages, villages of two or three hundred inhabitants, than at the time of the Domesday Survey. At this period the boroughs were becoming distinct types of settlement, but were not significantly larger than some of the villages. In the County of Somerset 17 places were described as boroughs, ranging in size from 11 households to 63 households. Only 3 boroughs had more than <sup>Boroughs</sup> 60 households. There were 13 villages with more than 60 households, 1 having 176 and another 103 households. In Staffordshire, there were 3 boroughs, having 55, 56, and 57 households respectively: there were no villages in the county of more than 47 households, and only 3 having more than 40. In Sussex and Worcestershire, there were villages that were as large or larger than boroughs, though in Worcestershire the City of Worcester was the largest place in the county. In 1280, at a period of great prosperity, it had a population of about 1800 persons, though no village had more than 1500 persons. The poll-tax returns for 1377 afford the first comprehensive indications of the emergence of towns that are distinctive units of settlement. The list of towns,



however, shows pretty clearly that the urban movement was just beginning.

POPULATION OF THE TOWNS LISTED ON THE ROLL OF THE POLL TAX  
OF 1377

(One third of the enumerated population is added to represent children, and one fifth of that total is added to cover possible omissions.)

London.....	37,302	Kingston-on-Hull.....	2,491
York.....	11,597	Ipswich.....	2,410
Bristol.....	10,152	Northampton.....	2,362
Plymouth.....	7,738	Nottingham.....	2,313
Coventry.....	7,706	Winchester.....	2,304
Norwich.....	6,322	Stamford.....	1,948
Lincoln.....	5,458	Newark.....	1,884
Salisbury.....	5,161	Ludlow.....	1,874
Lynn.....	5,002	Wells.....	1,874
Colchester.....	4,728	Southampton.....	1,843
Beverley.....	4,260	Derby.....	1,672
Newcastle.....	4,234	Lichfield.....	1,538
Canterbury.....	4,128	Chichester.....	1,389
Bury St. Edmunds.....	3,907	Boston.....	1,302
Oxford.....	3,770	Carlisle.....	1,084
Gloucester.....	3,582	Rochester.....	912
Leicester.....	3,361	Bath.....	912
Shrewsbury.....	3,331	Dartmouth.....	808
Yarmouth.....	3,105		
Hereford.....	3,044	9 towns over.....	5,000
Ely.....	2,857	11 towns.....	3,000-4,999
Cambridge.....	2,857	19 towns.....	1,000-2,999
Exeter.....	2,496	3 towns under.....	1,000
Worcester.....	2,491.		

The predominantly rural character of fourteenth-century England is suggested by the following tables:

TABLE IV  
NUMBER OF SETTLEMENTS: 1327 AND 1332

County	Under 20 names	20-39 names	40-59 names	Over 60 names	Boroughs
Leicester.....	279	43	1	..	1
Staffords.....	218	46	3	..	3
Somerset.....	402	138	20	13	17
Sussex.....	179	117	21	8	6
Worcester.....	110	58	23	6	5
York, North Riding, 1301.....	349	102	13	7	Manors 109

TABLE V

PROPORTIONS OF THE TOTAL POPULATION INHABITING EACH OF THE  
VARIOUS GROUPS OF SETTLEMENTS: 1327, 1332, AND 1301

County	Per cent in villages of				Per cent	
	Under 20 names	20-39 names	40-59 names	Over 60 names	In boroughs	Not specified
Leicester . . .	66.98	21.74	0.92	..	10.36	..
Staffords . . .	62.88	29.15	3.24	..	4.37	..
Somerset . . .	39.64	35.08	9.23	9.93	4.91	1.21
Sussex . . . . .	32.31	42.85	13.13	8.69	3.02	..
Worcester . . .	26.14	32.58	23.81	10.04	7.43	..
York, North Riding, 1301	43.29	28.31	6.89	4.22		17.29

If we assume that the total population is about six times the number of names on these subsidy rolls, it will be seen that the bulk of the population lived in villages of less than 300 inhabitants, and in some counties two thirds of the population lived in villages of less than 120 inhabitants. It is unfortunate that there has not been more study of the sources of information available to us. The statistics are not minutely accurate, and yet they present a more vivid picture of the general basis of medieval life than any other kind of information we possess. It would probably be possible to work out specifically the regions of small hamlets and large villages, and these differences in the size of settlements would have some relation to forms of village organization and methods of agriculture. Despite the amount of work that has been done on medieval records we may still feel that there are many important social data still to be gathered.

These figures for London are given, as the best obtainable. The growth of the seventeenth century is somewhat exaggerated by the inclusion of outlying parishes in the statistics. This is in itself an indication of the growing consciousness of the existence of a metropolitan area distinct from the City of London in its strict legal sense. The area for which figures are given after the beginning of the seventeenth century is the registration area of births and



## ESTIMATED POPULATION OF LONDON\*

1348-49.....	under 50,000
1377.....	43,700
1400-1500.....	40,000-50,000
1532-35.....	62,400
1563.....	93,276
1580.....	123,034
1593-95.....	152,478
1605.....	224,275
1622.....	272,207
1634.....	339,824
1661.....	460,000
1682.....	669,000
18th century.....	about 700,000
1801 (census).....	864,000

\* Creighton, C.: "The Population of Old London," *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. 149, pp. 484, 486, 495. It is unfortunate that Creighton makes no attempt to correlate the materials from the bills of mortality with the gradual changes in the limits within which such information was collected. These limits were extended with especial rapidity in the years 1631-61. The multiplicity of areas that might be called London is thus a serious source of confusion at an early stage of genuine metropolitan growth. The expansion of the seventeenth century is in considerable measure expansion of the area identified with London.

deaths, usually described as the area within the Bills of Mortality. Little attempt has been made to study all the elements involved in the growth of the general urban area, and, as these problems would require much critical study and no little erudition, it would be out of place to include such a study in the present sketch. Some general conception of the growth of London is, however, of great importance. It will be evident that the growth of London was very slow until somewhat after 1500. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were characterized by a notable increase in population, and this period of growth was brought to a close about 1700 by the difficulty of dealing with the sanitary problems of urban life. The plague was a persistent feature in the life of the city and a large factor in its death-rate. There was no possibility of growth by natural increase; the general level of population was maintained by the influx of people from the country. London and Paris were, at this period, about equal in size, Paris being perhaps slightly larger. Both cities failed to make any significant growth during the greater part of the eighteenth century. The increase in the size of London revealed by the census of 1801 is presumed to have been the result of the last ten or fifteen years.

## CHAPTER V

### VILLAGE AND MANOR

#### I

SYMPATHETIC appreciation of the life of the medieval period is impossible unless the rights and duties of the villager are clearly understood. The daily round of his duties and the legal definition of his relations to his neighbors are both of moment. Furthermore, we must not forget that during the major portion of the period the life of the villager was affected by the presence of a personage of some degree of social and political consequence. The "big house," as it is frequently called to-day by the English peas- <sup>villagers and</sup>antry, was not a part of the village in any accu- <sup>magnates</sup>ratesense of the word, but the life of the village was very definitely concerned with the "big house" and its master. The superficial appearance of rural life changes very slowly and there are still in England some few villages which would present to the casual observer most of the features of rural England in the thirteenth century. The crops would be different; farm implements would be better; food more varied; clothing profoundly changed; but the aspect of the village fields, the village street, and the "big house" would all be substantially as they were in the thirteenth century. The "shell" of the old English village can still be seen, though the legal framework of society has been completely transformed. In the few archaic villages that still exist the ancient system of farming is perhaps more nearly discernible than the legal and social relations among the villagers.

The present position of the aristocracy in England is of course a heritage from the remote past, and the critics of aristocratic institutions, therefore, find much to deplore in the ancient system that created this division of society into classes. Some have written bitterly of the titled personages that kept the land in "fetters," refusing to allow their fellow-

men to raise food on land which they themselves put to no higher use than the breeding of pheasants. Many problems of agrarian history have thus become so inextricably interwoven with the social problems of the present day that it is difficult to approach the past with the dispassionate detachment that is most favorable to a just understanding of history.

Those whose interest has been centered around the growth of free institutions have also contributed prejudices which color interpretations of the rural life of the middle ages. There are suspicions that the villager was originally free and that he lost his freedom by reason of the unjust use of political power and economic advantages. The slow process by which the villager acquired his freedom is followed with interest, but there is little sympathy for the system of social organization which is regarded as the means of depriving the villager of freedom. Many writers who find little to criticize in the institutions of the present day, thus find grounds for believing that the middle ages were a peculiarly dismal and unfavorable period. It is as difficult to pass judgment upon the medieval rural life as it is to appreciate justly the position of the negroes in the South before the Civil War. At their worst, these systems of organization were no doubt a curse to all concerned: slave and master, villein and lord, alike. At their best, and perhaps even generally, these institutions were not inconsistent with some measure of material well-being. It is doubtful if we can say more of the social institutions of our own time. Modern industrialism at its worst can create miseries which can scarcely be surpassed, though many are pleased to believe that there are opportunities for the development of personality that did not exist in earlier periods. An uncharitable critic, however, can paint a sufficiently dismal picture of our own day. Whether or no there is real improvement in the social conditions under which the mass of the people lives, it is at least certain that our understanding of the past is not promoted by attempts to discover evils and find grounds for the condemnation of long historical periods.

Judgment of  
the old order

not a primary  
purpose of  
history

The study of these bygone methods of agriculture and these obsolete English land tenures is gradually becoming part of a larger sociological study which includes not merely the more primitive periods of European development, but also the conditions which now exist among many peoples in the most sparsely settled portions of the world, most notably in Africa. The history of village life in India is also a portion of this more general study of primitive methods of agriculture and land-holding. The broader view of the sociologist tends to emphasize what the jurists and constitutional historians were prone to forget. These various primitive and archaic customs are not merely an historical stepping-stone to modern land law; they were methods of organizing rural life that had a significant relation to the economic needs of a sparse population. The laws and customs which we find so difficult to understand were the expression of vital economic needs, and it is not entirely clear yet that the opening-up of large areas of new land can be accomplished better under the principles of modern European law. Many changes in agrarian methods and many diversities in the form of settlement are due to changing relations of the population to the land. The legal organization of village life is thus only part of the problem and the merits of a particular method of legal organization cannot be judged except in relation to economic conditions. It is suggestive in this connection to remember the experience of the French in Algeria. It seemed to the administration in 1850-60 that it would be wise to clear away the obscurities and uncertainties of Moslem land tenures, which like medieval tenures rested on use rather than exclusive ownership. The precise conceptions of modern land law were thus substituted for these vague notions of use. It might well seem that such a policy was an enlightened furtherance of social progress. Events proved that it was a mistake. It has turned out to be economically disadvantageous; it has undermined native agriculture and concentrated land in the hands of Europeans, leaving the natives impoverished. In northern Nigeria the British ad-

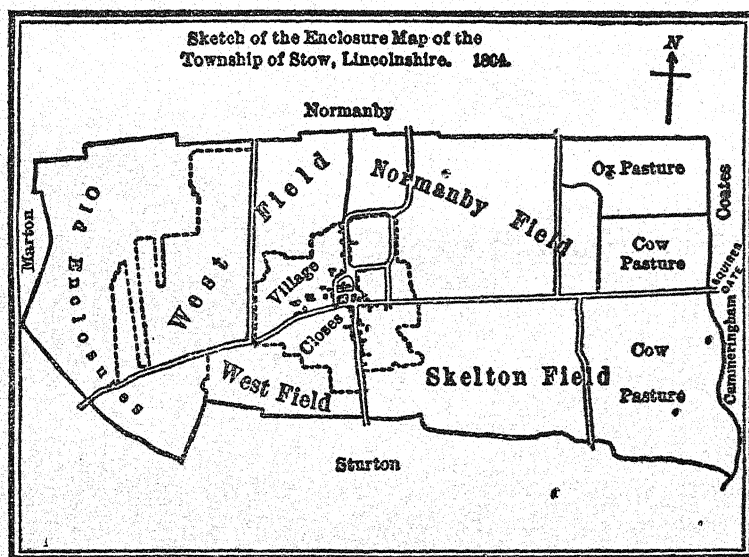
Sociology and  
land tenures

Tenure related  
to economic  
conditions

ministration is pursuing the opposite policy. Recent laws provide that no rights in land shall be recognized that are not established in the native customs. No one, least of all a European, is allowed to buy land. The necessity of following such a policy suggests a vital relation between primitive land tenures and the needs of primitive life. It is implied also that legal forms are not an end in themselves. The elaborately sophisticated notions of modern law are not absolutely better than primitive notions. The legal framework of society must be adapted to the economic conditions of the time.

## II. SCATTERED FARMS AND VILLAGES

A rural population may be settled on the land in one or more of three forms. The people may live in scattered farms;



in villages surrounded by enclosed fields and individual farms; or in villages surrounded by fields not divided into permanent individual holdings. In this last case the land was cultivated by the entire village in accordance with certain general rules and arrangements. The more perplexing historical and constitutional problems are concerned with this third form of settlement and its agricultural methods.

In the enclosed village the land would be cultivated by the individual villagers each according to his taste and disposition. The fields of each villager would be separated from the untilled land and from other <sup>Enclosed and open-field villages</sup> arable fields by permanent fences. In the open-field village, the land would lie in large masses unobstructed by any but the most temporary kinds of fence, divided into large units for each particular season. The enclosure map of the Parish of Stow illustrates the general features of this arrangement. There is a considerable area devoted to the village with its houses and gardens, and we may presume that this general area was separated from the outlying fields by permanent fences or hedges. The area designated as "old enclosures" was also divided into separate lots. These fields were cultivated without reference to the general agricultural arrangements of the village. At the other end of the village there were areas reserved for pasture; special grazing-land was set apart for the plough oxen in order to assure them ample forage at a short distance from the village. The arable land of the village thus lay in four irregular fields. There are grounds for believing that there were only two fields in the early period, designated respectively as "east" and "west" fields, and in those days we must presume that there was relatively more cow pasture and no enclosures at the westerly end of the village. The changes in the arrangement of the fields that can thus be deduced from the late map were the outcome of attempts to improve the system of village agriculture. If there were only two fields <sup>The two-field system</sup> one half the land of the village would lie idle each year, for medieval agriculture was based upon an alternation of cropping and fallowing. In the early period, the large masses of arable were devoted to wheat, and as long as no other crops were grown the resting of the land in alternate years was economically profitable.

The precise nature of the benefits of a fallow year is not well understood. It is now held that the decomposition of the great mass of roots left in the <sup>Fallowing</sup> soil by the cereal crops produces conditions that are un-

favorable to the growth of the same crop in the following year. It is not now deemed likely that the fertility of the soil is really impaired in any way that would admit of recovery during the fallow year, though the weathering in the interval is undoubtedly beneficial. Experiments conducted at Rothamstead for a series of years resulted in a production of slightly more than twelve bushels of wheat per acre when wheat was grown continuously, whereas eighteen bushels were grown per acre when an alternation of wheat and fallow was practiced.<sup>1</sup> These yields were larger than the medieval yields, as modern methods of cultivation were used, but one must presume that the proportionate importance of fallowing is roughly indicated. Under the three-field system the usual yield of wheat was eight or nine bushels per acre; proportionately less would be raised under the two-field system or under continuous cropping. In southern Russia and in parts of the United States farmers are content to harvest seven or eight bushels of wheat per acre, and an appreciably smaller yield must have been secured under continuous cropping in medieval Europe. Fallowing increased the crop so significantly that it became almost universal in the middle ages. At first an alternation of wheat and fallow was practiced; soon, further modification was made to economize the arable area. It was discovered that satisfactory crops of the other cereals could be grown immediately after a crop of wheat, and by this means the fallow was reduced to one year in three. One third of the arable only need lie idle. Somewhat less wheat would be grown, but there would be a crop of rye, oats, or barley. The change from the two-field system to the three-field system was probably made at an early date, for no general change in agricultural methods was necessary. No new crops were really introduced. Nothing need be done but rearrange the arable fields.

The three-field system

The division of the arable into two or three fields, which were left fallow every second or third year, made it necessary for each villager to have land in each field, and, though the

<sup>1</sup> Hall, A. D.: *The Book of Rothamstead Experiments* (New York, 1905), 65.



reason is not clear, the parcels of land used by the villagers were not compact masses even within the fields. Each field was divided into small strips <sup>Allotments to villagers</sup> containing at the most an acre or an acre and a half, seldom less than a quarter of an acre. Normally, the strips were long and narrow, but the shape of the strips was largely determined by the method of ploughing which was necessarily related to all the details of the configuration of the land. These small strips were divided among the villagers partly with reference to equal division of all the kinds of soil among all, partly with reference to coöperative ploughing. In the early period the strips of the villagers were intermingled so that no one would possess contiguous strips. If a villager maintained himself and his family entirely by agriculture he would require about thirty acres of arable land: his holding would consist of twenty-five or thirty strips scattered around in the two or three fields. The strips were divided from each other by ridges of unploughed turf, and the furrows were turned in toward the center of the strip so that the strips were pretty distinctly set off from each other.

The work of the village required some organization, because the dates of ploughing and harvesting were of importance to all. The cattle were usually turned in <sup>Village agri- culture</sup> upon the stubble after the harvest, and it was therefore essential that no one should delay this use of the fields by neglecting to get in his crops with the others. Ploughing and planting were subject to similar limitations. In order to avoid wasting land in lanes and roadways, no permanent provision was made for access to the fields. Certain strips were designated to serve as means of access, and they were therefore ploughed last. It was equally necessary to harvest them first in the fall. Crops, ploughing, planting, harvesting, were thus all subject to some rough organization for the village as a whole. Ploughs and plough teams were owned jointly and used coöperatively. The village constituted a community in a more organic sense than the modern village, but one must avoid confusing this organization of agriculture with what we think of to-day as communism.

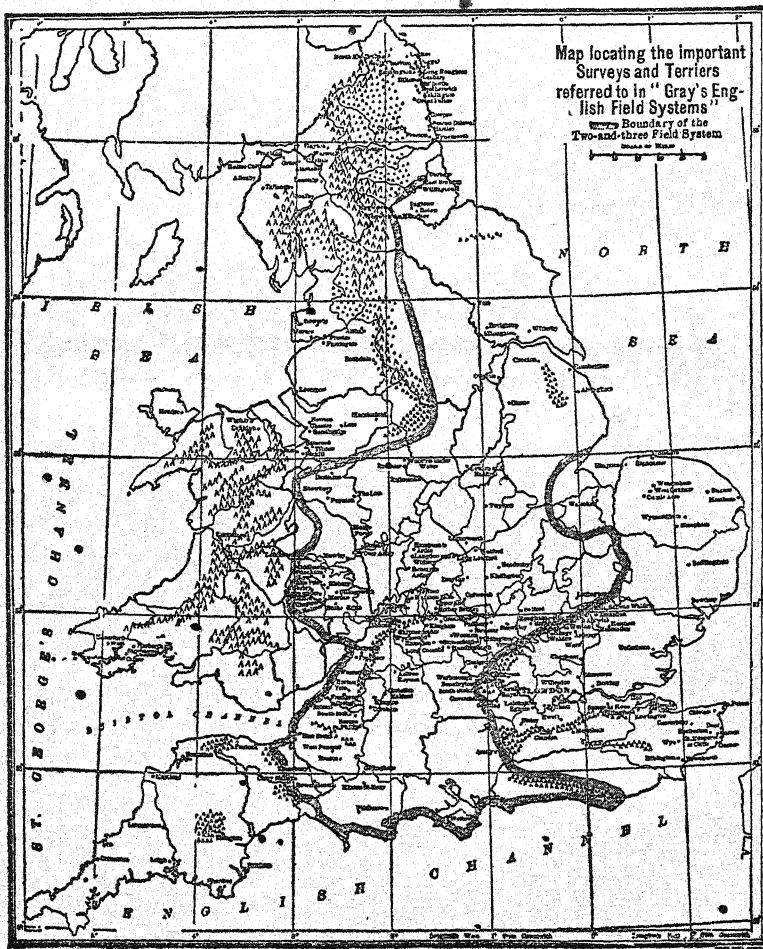
There was no community of goods in the mediæval village; both land and crops were subject to the control of individuals and were capable of being accumulated. The nature of the rights over the land were different from the property rights familiar to us, but there was an exclusive right to use certain quantities of land which makes it impossible to compare this mediæval system with any type of socialistic communism.

Mediæval England exhibited all three forms of settlement. Scattered farms were the characteristic forms in some of the infertile regions; and even in the fertile sections, there were usually some farms lying interspersed among the villages. Hamlets or small villages which possessed no organized two- or three-field system were the characteristic feature of the northern counties, and predominated likewise in Wales and Scotland. Larger villages without field systems were found in the eastern counties. Organized field systems were the predominant feature of village life in the midlands.

The explanation of these different modes of settlement has been largely based in the past upon the racial aspects of the settlement of Britain. The scattered farm is identified with surviving Celts; the open-field villages with their field systems are identified with Teutonic elements; and the absence of field systems in the eastern counties is explained by survival of Roman forms of rural organization. This identification of the mode of settlement with racial customs has so long commanded the allegiance of constitutional historians that it is hardly fitting to do more than urge the claims of explanations that are economic rather than cultural and legal. Study of conditions in Siberia by Russian scholars has shown that the highly organized open-field village can develop naturally out of scattered farms, which tend to predominate when the country is first settled by casual colonists. The development of village life creates scarcities of arable land and meadows which make it desirable to restrict individual caprice and greed. We are thus in a position to assert that these different forms of village life are

not exclusively of racial origin, though the character of the Teutonic migrations in Europe undoubtedly adds racial and cultural elements to the history of settlement in western Europe. Furthermore, the emphasis upon the underlying economic factors by these Russian scholars affords explanations of many features of medieval life that would otherwise have no meaning to us at the present day.

The transition from the settlement in scattered farms to the open-field village, or village community, is brought about primarily by increase of population. Different methods of



using land become necessary because land becomes *relatively* scarce. The significance of increasing population and of relative scarcities of land must be considered with reference to each type of land. In primitive times little attempt is made to transform nature. The meadows are the only source of hay, because they alone present sufficiently favorable conditions to the growth of grasses to maintain a continuous crop. Forests are not cut clear and the land prepared for the plough until all the unforested land has been occupied, and the search for such unforested land has been a notable feature of the migrations and settlement of western Europe. If the population is sparse there will be meadow and arable for all. Each settler can appropriate such land as he needs. Land is substantially a free good.

On the non-appropriated meadows the unrestricted right to cut grass produces, with increase of population, disastrous results. As the number of cutters increases, competition arises, and each tries to commence cutting earlier than the others; this diminishes the crop, because no one waits until it is fully ripe. All lose by this, and the community, to prevent it, forbids the cutting of grass before a certain date. . . . The next stage in the regulation of meadows has already an equalizing character. In Siberia, among the Kirgizes, the Cossacks, etc. the preventive measures are followed by a limitation of the number of cutters each family may employ. . . . Finally, the community allots to those who have not enough grass, parts of the meadows occupied by others.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of appropriated arable land the process is more complicated. At the outset each settler is free to occupy such land as he can. Despite the seeming equality of opportunity inequalities soon arise. •With a large family more land can be occupied and used. The possession of a few more draught animals enables a man to bring much more land under cultivation. Small differences in nomad wealth thus become translated into large differences in landed possessions. Class conflicts arise between the rich peasants and the poor, which may at times

<sup>1</sup> Lewinski: *Origin of Property in Land*, p. 33.

result in violence. Once the poor become relatively numerous and suitable plough land becomes scarce, the original freedom of occupation is restricted. Because arable land is more necessary than meadow, pasture, or forest, it is provided that no one shall have the right to make such use of the land if some villager is ready and willing to plough the land. "It is forbidden to offer resistance to the plough." This regulation is likely to destroy the scattered farms, as their pastures and meadows are broken up for arable. Presently restrictions are placed upon the number of years that land may be left fallow. After a stated interval an occupier loses all exclusive rights of use, and the land may be ploughed by any villager. Actual allotments of land to the poor are at first made from the estates of those who die without heirs, or from the property of those who refuse to pay the village taxes. Annual allotment of the land is reached only at a late date.

The stages of development which Lewinski traces among the peasants of Siberia would doubtless represent the unhindered operation of economic forces. At the time of the first contacts between the Romans and the Germanic tribes the annual allotment of village lands was common among many villages, though not universal. The passages in Tacitus which refer to settlements in scattered farms have been the subject of much controversy, and, in the opinion of some, cast doubt upon the description of the practice of allotments in chapter twenty-six. It is peculiarly unfortunate that the text is so corrupt that no undoubted reading can be given for this latter chapter, but the account of Tacitus becomes much more plausible in all respects if we do not look upon this matter of agriculture as a definitely racial custom. If we anticipate some diversity of practice, as would be natural among tribes whose economic conditions were somewhat different, the difficulties of the text of Tacitus would largely disappear. It would seem in fact that the Germanic tribes were at that time at a stage of development in village organization roughly comparable to that of the various tribes in Siberia at the close of the past century. The open-field village was coming to

Customs of  
the Germanic  
tribes

be the characteristic feature of rural life, but many scattered farms existed, and many villages were really in an intermediate stage of development. The pressure of population that is deemed to be a motive in the migrations of the Teutonic tribes would be consistent with such a development of organized village life based on the relative scarcity of land. In so far as the migration involved entire tribes, there would be every reason to suppose that the forms of village organization would not be greatly changed even though the villagers were to find a relative abundance of land available. The mode of social organization would survive despite the removal of the economic pressure that had been the cause of its development. The different modes of village life of Celts, Germans, and Romans were due to the different economic circumstances of their life prior to the great migrations. The relegation of the Celts to the infertile districts tended to perpetuate modes of settlement adapted to the needs of a sparse population. Little concentration of population was possible, so that no elaborate forms of village life developed until a late period. The Celts continued to live in scattered farms and hamlets, not so much because they were Celts as because they were poor people living in an inhospitable country. The Germans brought the habits of organized village life to the fertile sections of France and England and the development of rural life that had begun in Germany continued without serious interruption.

Racial differences

### III. THE COMMON PEOPLE AND THE MAGNATES

The forms of village organization are not in themselves an indication of the general structure of rural society. Society might be essentially democratic or essentially aristocratic, or there might be significant changes in the degree of social stratification. The legal details of village life would naturally be somewhat different in these various circumstances, but it is not necessary to assume that there would be any profound changes in the system of agriculture or in the superficial aspects of village life. By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries aristocracy had become a funda-

The aristocracy

mental feature of English life. The magnates were occupied with military and administrative functions. They were maintained partly by the produce of landed estates exploited in their behalf by the villagers, partly by produce turned over to them by the villagers. The existence of a class of magnates thus presupposes a servile class or classes; some persons entirely deprived of personal liberty, others enjoying a qualified freedom.

The social organization of Britain, as of Gaul, during the Roman occupation was predominantly aristocratic. Rural life was dominated by the great landed proprietors whose estates (villas) were tilled by classes of unfree tenants. <sup>The Roman system</sup> The estate was divided into two portions: a domain exploited directly by slaves under the supervision of the agents and stewards of the proprietor, and a portion let out to tenant farmers (*coloni*) for rents payable in money or in kind. Both of these classes of unfree tenants exhibit many varieties of condition: there were various degrees of personal freedom among the slaves as among the tenant farmers. There were slaves who enjoyed no freedom of action at all, mere members of the gangs of ten which were the usual unit in the working of the estate. There were other slaves who were entrusted with a small holding and a cottage, so that they enjoyed much personal liberty in the details of their work and in their family life. The tenant farmers were free in the legal sense of the word, but they were bound to the soil. They were not allowed to leave the estate, nor permitted to marry any one dependent upon another lord or master. The obligations of the tenant farmers were variable in many details: the amount of rent due the proprietor varied, as also the mode of payment. Some tenants, who had brought new land into cultivation, were required merely to continue to cultivate their holding. Other tenants were obliged to pay significant rents.

Some elements of Roman life undoubtedly survived the Germanic invasions. The sites and names of many modern French villages are a survival <sup>Extensive survival unlikely</sup> from Roman times. Roman land measures and field ar-



rangements left traces in both Gaul and Britain. But there are grave doubts of any general survival of the aristocratic structure of rural life. The history of the invasions and the conditions subsequent to them present an infinite variety of detail, so that no general statements can wisely be made; it would seem likely, however, that the rural aristocracy of Roman times disappeared largely if not completely, and it is equally probable that no Germanic aristocracy succeeded immediately to such a dominant position in social life. Germanic society was not lacking in social classifications even at the time of the invasions, but the proportion of freemen was large and the actual differences in wealth much less considerable than in the Roman society that was destroyed. The invasions no doubt increased in some measure the power and economic importance of the leaders, but it is unlikely that the magnates among the invaders acquired complete predominance in any short period of time. The aristocratic structure of society in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries must be traced primarily to the influences at work in political and social life among the Germanic peoples. The aristocratic forms of the later period were not borrowed from the Romans; despite many resemblances, they were the product of spontaneous growth.

The need of military protection was of great moment in giving larger importance to the magnates, and the incursions of the Danes exerted a profound influence upon the development of Anglo-Saxon institutions. The increasing solidarity of political organization was also a factor of great importance. The formation of a strong monarchy practically required the development of an aristocracy possessed of administrative as well as military functions. The magnates thus became the chief bond between the rural village and the larger social life of the kingdom. The aristocracy was a means of securing some measure of centralization in a social structure whose essential principles seemed to be excessive decentralization. The change in the character of social life is concretely expressed by the gradual decline of dependence upon the group of kins-

Growth of  
a military  
aristocracy

men and a corresponding increase in the reliance upon the protection of some noble patron or lord. There were many motives underlying the acceptance of qualified freedom by peasants who were originally free of all obligations to an aristocracy; poverty, loss of blood-kindred by violence, displacements caused by Danish incursions, might all lead to the willing acceptance of the protection of a lord. We have not sufficient information to trace these social changes in any detail, but it is fairly clear that the growth of dependence upon the magnates was of mutual advantage; a gain to the peasant as well as a source of power to the lord.

The drift toward manorial organization was greatly stimulated by the changes brought about by the Norman Conquest, so that we cannot be sure how far back we can wisely carry the manor as we come to know <sup>The origin of the manor</sup> it immediately after the Conquest. It is certain, however, that the structure of society in the eleventh century is not wholly the work of the Normans. The mass of material furnished by the Domesday Survey tends to give conditions at the close of the eleventh century a somewhat disproportionate place in history, and the slow development of the Saxon period is just beginning to be fully appreciated. *Domesday Book*, however, affords abundant evidence of the existence of the main features of the aristocratic society that reached the height of its power in the thirteenth century. The enumeration of the population was not comprehensive but it seems to have been designed to include the heads of families and servants attached to the households of persons of consequence. The results of the enumeration must show approximately the proportions of the different classes of society.

In England as a whole, society had thus become notably aristocratic: the mass of the population were unfree, and, though the tenant farmers are presumed to have <sup>Dependent classes</sup> held sufficient land to guarantee some measure of economic independence, they were none the less required to make some contribution to the affluence and magnificence of the great feudal establishments. The crofters (*bordarii* and

PER CENT OF PERSONS ENUMERATED IN EACH CLASS TO THE TOTAL  
POPULATION ENUMERATED IN DOMESDAY BOOK: 1086\*

	Per cent
Base tenures —	
Serfs ( <i>servi</i> ) .....	9.
Crofters ( <i>bordarii and cottarii</i> ) .....	31.5
Tenant farmers ( <i>villani</i> ) .....	38.
Total base tenures .....	78.5
Honorable tenures —	
Yeoman farmers (soc-men and freemen) .....	12.
Tenants in chief and mesne lords. ....	*3.5
Enumerated persons not included in the above classification. ....	6.
	100.0

\*Inman: *Feudal Statistics*, 2.

*cottarii*) were persons who had some land, five or ten acres at the most, but not enough to occupy their full time nor to provide sufficiently for their families. They worked on the lord's estate and received pay in kind. The dependence of these servile classes upon the lord was real, but it is not necessary to presume that their economic condition was intolerable. The yeoman farmers had at least sufficient land to afford their family adequate provision, they were all economically independent; the freemen were in addition legally independent, looking to the King's courts for justice; the soc-men were required to attend some manorial court and thus subject to the payment of certain legal fees to a manorial lord.

In this aristocratic system that was growing up the unit of rural organization was the manor: a person might hold several manors, and the ecclesiastical corporations held large numbers of them, but in such cases the manors retained their administrative and legal individuality. Ordinarily the manor consisted of a residence and farm utilized by the lord of the manor, together with a mass of peasant holdings. There was usually an organized village, but the village need not be exclusively inhabited by persons depending on the manor. The holdings of freemen might be intermingled in the village fields with the strips belonging to the lord's farm and the strips held by the lord's tenants. The complexities of the legal organization of rural life are in large measure due to the lack of precise correlation

**Manors**

of the various categories. Fiscal terminology does not quite correspond to legal terminology, and legal terminology does not entirely correspond to the groupings of the population in villages and hamlets. This lack of correspondence between the various aspects of social organization leads to no little diversity of meanings in connection with the term manor. "The prevalent meaning," says Vinogradoff, "is that of an estate or district of which the central house is the hall." It would seem that an attempt had been made in the Saxon period to substitute estates of four or five hides (presumed to be equivalent to 480 to 600 acres) held by thanes for a quantity of small freehold tenements. The revenue presumed to be derived from such an estate would correspond to property units that were used in calculating military obligations. The conception of the manor was thus influenced by fiscal and military policies which made it desirable to create appearances of uniformity which did not exist.

Actual manors, as they appear in *Domesday*, do not often conform to these averages, and present a variety of different types which must be examined separately if we want to form an opinion as to the character and origins of Principal types manorial institutions. They may be arranged very roughly in the following five classes; with a good many subdivisions and intermediate shades between them. The grouping would be somewhat as follows: the manor as a capitalistic organization, an economic center surrounded by peasant holdings supporting it; the manor as an administrative center of scattered and more or less independent settlements; the soke, a center of jurisdictional and tributary organization; royal manors; small estates exploited directly by their masters or rustics.<sup>1</sup>

These types will perhaps be more readily perceived if some of the descriptions in *Domesday Book* are given. An example of the capitalistic manor may be found in Bedfordshire, the manor of Segenehou. Two fifths of this manor, four hides, was reckoned as the lord's farm; assuming the ploughlands to be 120 acres, this would mean a demesne farm of 480 acres. The rest of the manor, 720 acres, was occupied by tenants: 24 villein households, 4 crofter households, and

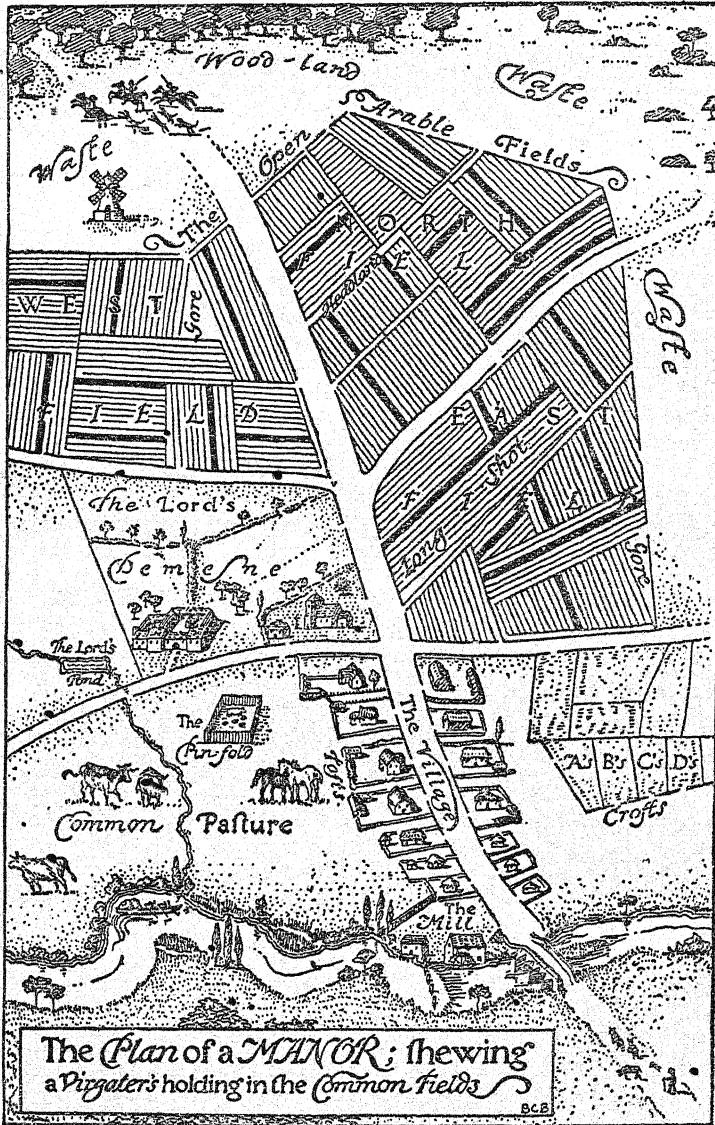
<sup>1</sup> Vinogradoff, P.: *English Society in the Eleventh Century*, 311.

3 serfs. Formerly, there had been one soc-man on the manor, holding 60 acres, but he had disappeared. The medium-sized manors were usually of this type, and in such cases there was real interdependence between the lord's farm and the peasant holdings. In the very large estates, belonging to the wealthiest magnates and to monastic houses, the home farm tends to become entirely subordinate to the peasant holdings. The revenue of such an estate was derived from tribute and from assignments to the lord of portions of the produce of the peasants.

When the manor was merely an administrative organization this subordination of the lord's farm to the peasant holdings was even more marked. A royal Administrative manors manor of Mansfield, Notts, is fairly representative. This consisted of a central manor with outlying portions. The central portion consisted of a demesne farm and peasant holdings, but barely one tenth of the total area lay in the lord's farm. There were, besides, twenty-seven settlements attached to the manor for purposes of taxation, and in none of these outlying portions was there any land that constituted a demesne farm. "We are clearly in a district of scattered homesteads," says Vinogradoff, "inhabited by small farmers paying dues to the central court at Mansfield, and possibly performing some services for it." When the manor became primarily a center of political and legal obligations this relationship between the central nucleus and the appendages was strikingly emphasized. Thus, the manor of Bolingbroke in Lincolnshire had a demesne farm of 240 acres, subordinate holdings in the immediate locality for 12 soc-men, 12 villeins, and 8 crofters; as an economic center, it was only of moderate size. Its jurisdiction extended over 17 places and 529 soc-men were under obligation to attend the manorial court. The income from the manor must therefore have been derived chiefly from fines collected in the court. The royal manors exhibit all these features, but also some special features, but these matters are hardly of moment in an introductory survey of rural organization. The very small manors are likewise a problem for the erudite.

#### IV. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE MANOR IN THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES

The general aspect of the typical manor is presented in the representative plan shown below. The common fields, com-





mon pasture, and waste were the persistent features of the rural landscape. The demesne farm would not, in the early period, consist of a solid block of land; it lay in strips in the common fields intermingled with the holdings of the peasants. Later it was brought together in the compact mass represented in the map. The separation of the village from the cottages of the crofters is wholly typical, and the manorial mill likewise. The wind-mill that stands by itself in the waste cannot readily be brought within the scope of normal manorial organization. The lord of the manor had the right to compel the tenants of the estate to use his mill, but he seldom indulged in the luxury of two mills and never long permitted any one to infringe upon his monopoly of milling.

The economic organization of the manor was designed to provide for the exploitation of the lord's farm by the labor services rendered by the tenants. For purposes of definition of the obligations of the tenants the labor services were divided into two main classes: the week works, an obligation to work two or three days each week under the supervision of the lord's bailiff; the boon days, supplementary services rendered chiefly in connection with ploughing and harvesting. Villeins were required to render service of both types, and freemen were usually supposed to grant the lord certain boon days. In addition to these services various kinds of work were required of cottagers; blacksmithing, carpenter work, holding the lord's plough, herding the sheep, were characteristically the tasks of persons not engaged in tilling a thirty-acre holding: one may look upon the cottagers, or crofters, as servants who have been given some measure of personal independence or as villagers who have lost their economic independence. It is probably more correct to look upon these cottagers as a class of servants living in independent houses, though some of them become relatively independent village craftsmen.

The various classes of dependents on the estates of manorial lords were graded into a hierarchy with reference to the degree of subjection to the lord's pleasure. The cottagers



were presumed to be under obligation to render such service as they were bidden to perform; their full time was their lord's, though it is likely that they were left considerable opportunity to work small garden plots. The villeins were under obligation to render definitely limited services. The stigma of villeinage attached to the uncertainty of each day's work; the villein was never able to know what the morrow would bring forth, he must needs perform the task set him by the officers of the lord, provided that the quantity of work required did not exceed the conditions defined by his tenure. The freeman, under obligation to furnish merely certain boon works, escaped the taint of servile dependence upon the orders of the lord. The burden of the general farm-work thus fell upon the tenant farmers, persons holding twenty or thirty acres by some form of unfree tenure. Serfdom was not a prominent feature of English village life, so that references to the position of serfs are not abundant. It would seem that the distinctive feature of serfdom lay in the character of the tenure rather than the size of the holding.

The supervision of these labor services was a considerable task so that certain administrative officers were essential. The affairs of the lord were in the hands of two officers, the steward and the bailiff. The steward was charged with legal and financial business: he held the manor court, or leet, attended to all matters connected with the tenures of the villagers and their financial obligations to the lord. The steward also supervised the market, if the lord had the privilege of holding market. There was always the mill to manage. The steward exercised some supervision over the general arrangement of the fields of the demesne farm, but he was not concerned with any details of farm management. The management of the farm was in the hands of the bailiff and the hayward: the former had charge of general arrangements of culture; the latter, oversight of the woods, cereal crops, and meadows. The hayward's functions were thus pretty extensive. The organization of harvesting was his work. The supervision of fences around the

arable to keep cattle out during the growing season, and the impounding of stray cattle, also fell to his lot.

Coördinate in importance with these officers of the lord was the village reeve. He was elected by the villagers to direct the general agricultural operations of the village, and all details concerning the management of the fields. The bailiff was supposed to keep an eye upon the reeve, but in actual fact the reeve was quite as important as the bailiff from the point of view of village life. The village constable was also elected by the villagers, and the inspection of bread was carried out by persons chosen by the villagers assembled in the court leet. There were thus some elements of democracy in the organization of the manor.

The legal organization of the manor implies that each manor was a substantially independent unit of social life, and, in the early period, this may have been generally true. The growth of commerce, however, and the increase in the concentration of wealth led to the grouping of manors and ultimately subordinated the manor to commercial contacts with the market that destroyed the close interdependence between the household of the manorial lord and the labor services of the tenants.

By the thirteenth century there were three classes of manors: manors which were essentially independent, manors which belonged to a monastic house thus forming part of a large group which sent their products to the monastery, manors which belonged to some great noble or bishop who would find it convenient to perambulate the country with his household to consume on each manor the surplus available for his maintenance. In this last type the manor was merely a source of income for a non-resident-magnate. It was sound feudal theory that each lord should live on the proceeds of his estates, and for a time this was literally done. The tenants were under obligation to render services in carting and hauling so that the products of the demesne farm could be concentrated in some central place. In so far as the manors were the property of monastic houses, it was essential that the produce should thus be sent to the

Collection of  
the income

central establishment. Perambulation of the group of manors was somewhat more economical, but both of these methods of collecting the revenues were inconvenient. The possessions of individual proprietors were widely scattered, and it was really less convenient to collect the rents in kind than to collect them in money with which supplies could be purchased at the nearest market. The period 1250-1500 is marked by a gradual transition toward conversion of labor dues into money rents, and toward an abandonment of the demesne farm. It became more profitable to let out the demesne farm. The surplus grain of each village came gradually to be sold in the nearest market and the great households became purchasers in the market. The connection between non-resident lords and their manors thus became more exclusively financial, and the villagers became more nearly tenant farmers whose only obligation to their lord was the payment of a money rent. The rise of the local market thus tended to destroy the characteristic economic features of the manor almost as soon as the legal features of the manor began to assume definite outline. Before 1500 the manor ceased to be of any vital significance in the economic organization of England, though the court leet long remained a notable feature of village life.

## V. THE END OF VILLEINAGE IN ENGLAND

The transition from labor services and payments in kind to payment of rents in money, that proved to be a primary cause of the decline of the manorial economy, exerted a profound influence upon the status of the tenant farmers. The distinction between free tenure and villein tenure was greatly diminished even by a moderate commutation of labor services into money dues, and when all obligations had been translated into money the only remaining difference lay in the nature of the record of the title to the holding. A freeholder theoretically held his own title-deeds; the transformed villein could at best show nothing more than a copy of the records of the court leet. His tenure was no longer subject to the lord's will, but from a

Commutation

The rise of  
the free  
peasantry

legal point of view it was in many ways inferior to a freehold title. The last vestiges of this copyhold tenure have not yet been entirely swept away, though the legislation of the late nineteenth century leaves little but the name.

The study of the passing of villeinage is still far from complete. In the past it has been approached almost exclusively from the point of view of the villein. The researches of Professor Gras in the field of market organization have disclosed motives that are so definitely advantageous to the lord that it would seem likely that the transformation was less exclusively a conquest of freedom by the villeins than has been assumed. The history of the rise out of villeinage would thus seem to be more than a chapter in the struggle for liberty in which the privileged classes are presumed to play merely an obstructive rôle. It is wholly probable that there should be much friction in a period of re-definition of obligations. The lord would watch his revenues with solicitude; the villagers would similarly try to utilize the occasion to pare down their obligations. The attempt to convert somewhat uncertain rights to service into precise equivalents in money must inevitably have created much difficulty, and no little tension; and yet, on the whole, both lord and tenant found a vital interest in the transition to a system of money payments.

Studies in the manorial records have thrown some light upon the chronology of the movement. It appears that little progress had been made toward the new order prior to the Black Death, and it seems equally certain that the disorganization of rural life by that pestilence exerted a profound influence upon the organization of the manor. Many tenants died of the plague, and many bailiffs. It was less easy to maintain the old customs. Sometimes the demesne was diminished in extent because it was difficult to keep it under cultivation as a unit. Sometimes it was necessary to attract new tenants by making more favorable leases. For many reasons commutation became increasingly common in the generation following the Black Death. The relation of the peasant rising in 1381 to

Mutual ad-  
vantages

Influence of  
the Black  
Death

the rise out of villeinage is as yet uncertain. The social background is still a matter of controversy, as well as the details of the revolt. By 1400, however, commutation of rents was more common than the exaction of the old labor services, and toward the latter part of the fifteenth century the old system was exceptional.

The social position of the villeins thus became substantially similar to that of the small freeholders, the independent peasant proprietors who are usually spoken of as the forty-shilling free-holders, or yeomen. The <sup>Yeomen</sup> aristocratic structure of society persisted, but the power of the aristocracy was tempered by the presence of this large number of peasant cultivators who had become substantially, if not technically, independent. Nearly half of the rural population must have been included in this class of yeomen farmers, as augmented by the emancipation of the villeins from their precarious services. Many other rustics who did not have sufficient land to afford them full maintenance were rendered independent by the returns from craft work. The artisans in town and country must have constituted a numerous class, and there is perhaps ground for presuming that between one half and two thirds of the population were economically independent. There were wage-earners both in the crafts and in agriculture, but it was unusual for any to remain wage-earners permanently. The social ladder was intact, and the diligent might reasonably expect to achieve independence in agriculture or in industry.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TRADERS AND THE TOWNS

#### I

THE interpretation of the economic history of the middle ages has been dominated in great measure by the conception of the "town economy" developed by Schmoller, Ashley, Bücher, and other writers of that generation.

Each town [says Schmoller, in his famous essay on the Mercantile System], and especially each of the larger towns, seeks to shut itself up to itself as an economic whole, and at the same time, in its relation to the outside world, to extend the sphere of its influence, both economic and political, as far as possible. It is not without significance that, during a considerable period of ancient and medieval history, all complete political structures were city states, in which political and economic life, local economic selfishness and political patriotism, political conflict and economic rivalry, all coincided. The economic policy of the German towns of the middle ages, and their economic institutions, have played a controlling part in German life down to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; they project themselves, so to speak, in so many directions, into our own time, that we must pause a moment to speak of them more at length.

Not only separate jurisdiction, but also the right of holding a market, of collecting tolls, and of coining money, were, from early times, the privileges of growing urban communities. This exceptional position was strengthened by the abolition of payments and services in kind, as well as by the principle that "town air makes free"; and finally, by the conquest of the right of self-government and legislation by the town council. Each separate town felt itself to be a privileged community, gaining right after right by struggles kept up for hundreds of years, and forcing its way into one political and economical position after another. . . .

Market rights, toll rights, and mile rights are the weapons with which the town creates for itself both revenue and a municipal policy. The soul of that policy is the putting of fellow citizens at an advantage, and of competitors from the outside at a disadvantage. The whole complicated system of regulations as to markets and forestalling is nothing but a



contrivance so to regulate supply and demand between the townsman who buys and the countryman who sells, that the former may find himself in a position as favorable as possible, the latter as unfavorable as possible, in the business of bargaining. . . . The whole well-rounded law, as to strangers or "foreigners" was an instrument wherewith to destroy, or, at all events, to diminish the superiority of richer and more skilful competitors from outside. Except during a fair, the foreigner was excluded from all retail trade, allowed to remain only a certain time and prohibited from lending money to or entering into partnership with a burgess. . . . In short, the town market formed a complete system of currency, credit, trade, tolls, and finance, shut up in itself and managed as a united whole and on a settled plan; a system which found its center of gravity exclusively in its local interests, which carried on the struggle for economic advantages with its collective forces, and which prospered in proportion as the reins were firmly held by prudent and energetic merchants and patricians able to grasp the whole situation.<sup>1</sup>

This interpretation of municipal policy contains many brilliant half-truths; the various aspects of political and economic policy cited in proof of the inter-pretation are indeed a faithful reflection of the ordinances and the provisions of the charters. But these provisions have been read literally in a narrow legal spirit. Little care has been taken to seek the vital significance of these regulations in the economic and political life of the medieval period. The sinister influence of municipal authority in the later period has been reflected back to the earlier period in which these institutions arose.

Literal interpretation of the legal documents of the middle ages is peculiarly dangerous. It was a period of intense formalism: a formalism so rigid that few rules could be carried out to the letter. Furthermore, the emphasis on form rather than content created an attitude of mind that was particularly open to legal fictions and evasions of many kinds. The political organization of the general community was highly complex: there were many overlapping jurisdictions, interwoven in such a manner that acts prohibited in one set of regulations were protected and guaranteed by regulations of a coördinate jurisdiction. The difficulty of visualizing

<sup>1</sup> Schmoller, G.: *The Mercantile System* (New York, 1910), 6 ff.

the entire structure of this social organization tempts us to isolate the problems that are most nearly comparable to our own, and, while this method leads to results, it seldom furnishes an accurate representation of medieval life. The municipal constitutions tended, in practically all portions of medieval Europe, to raise obstacles to commercial development, but the traders found a larger freedom than would have been possible within the limits of the municipal constitutions in the fairs, in the special privileges obtained by great trading companies, and in the development of a Law Merchant enforced by special courts. Writers upon constitutional history have been constantly aware of this vigorous development of mercantile privileges, but to them these privileges and arrangements are exceptions; exceptions because the municipal organization is presumed to be the primary legal background. The merits of the legal question need not be argued at length, but it would seem safe to say that these different masses of law and privilege were at least of coördinate importance during the medieval period.

The enfranchisement of trade

Adequacy of the privileges

It is difficult for us to realize that trade could flourish upon the basis of such a mass of special privileges as were characteristic of the middle ages, and it would indeed be impossible to maintain the continuity of trade or to transact the volume of business that characterizes modern commerce. It is essential to remember that medieval trade was after all comparatively small in volume; confined to a small number of commodities in any given region, and periodic rather than continuous. The great staple commodities found a market that was spatially extensive. From a very early date the various countries of western Europe and the Mediterranean world were engaged in systematic trade. The territorial extent of the market for most products is frequently underestimated. Textile districts, woollens, linens, and silks; metal districts; leather districts; regions producing spices, drugs, and dye-stuffs became distinct as early as the twelfth century, and this geographical division of labor became the basis of an active

commerce that was as truly "world-commerce" as the commerce of to-day. The known world was smaller, but the commerce of the time included practically all parts of the known world. This trade was not in any vital sense dependent upon rights of trading in the towns as municipalities. The fairs were the primary basis of the distribution of these basic commodities throughout Europe, and these fairs, organized with more or less elaboration, constituted a vast trading community that was international in structure as in its legal rules and procedure. The trading community

The fair charters were thus the guarantees of commercial freedom, just as the municipal charters were the bulwarks of political freedom. Little by little the bond of union between trade and the towns became closer, and, in the end, the special franchises of the traders became a part of the municipal constitution. The nature and degree of this assimilation of these two types of franchises differed widely in the various European countries. In France and in England the municipal constitution came to be relatively favorable to the trader, and the older, more special organization of commerce receded into the background. In Germany, most especially in Prussia, municipal selfishness maintained itself longer as a substantial fact, so that the fairs remained an essential feature of commercial life down to modern times.

The constitutional history of municipalities is thus distinct from the economic history of the organization of commerce and the growth of commercial towns. It is particularly necessary to avoid identifying the rise of municipal freedom with the rise of commercial freedom. These developments were closely related and each exerted important influences upon the other, but for a long period these matters can best be treated as distinct episodes in the development of urban life.

## II. FAIRS AND THE LAW MERCHANT

The fair is not sharply distinguished from the market, though its functions and organization are different in many respects. The German phrase "Jahrmarkt" indicates the

close association of the underlying ideas: the fair was a kind of market held at less frequent intervals and for the purpose of transacting a different kind of business. The market was concerned with supplying the necessities of life, serving primarily as a bond between town and country. It was the basis of such interchange of primary products as was necessary among specialized craft-workers and the agricultural members of the community. Even in small towns and villages the market was held each week. The fair was a similar organization designed to maintain some connection between the town or village and the outside world. As the dependence upon such trading connections was slight it was usually possible to meet these needs by holding one fair each year. The fair was usually associated with some church festival of general or local importance. Easter week, Saint John's Day, Trinity, and All Saints were common dates for fairs. The feast of the patron saint of the town or monastery was the most usual choice when the date was based upon purely local considerations.

Fairs of purely local significance seldom lasted more than one day, and the majority of fairs were of this type. It is not always possible to distinguish grants of fairs from grants of the right to hold a market, for it was usual to combine the right to hold an annual fair with the right to hold a market. The Committee on Market Rights and Tolls reported the following numbers of grants: for the thirteenth century 3300; for the fourteenth century 1560; for the fifteenth century down to 1482, 100; a total of 4960 fairs and markets granted and probably existing at the close of the fifteenth century. The kingdom was thus provided with a very substantial mechanism for the maintenance of commercial contacts. The trader was by necessity of the case a traveler, in most instances accomplishing a fairly definite circuit each year, for the generous distribution of fairs throughout the year made it possible to arrange reasonably continuous circuits.

The fair, however, was not merely a basis for the retail distribution of the primary imports: the wholesale trade in the

great staples of foreign commerce was likewise carried on in fairs. Particular fairs came to be frequented by the foreign merchants and the itinerant re-tailers. At times the rise of fairs to peculiar importance was due to genuinely important economic factors, such as the location of the town with reference to trade routes or its relation to the more important manufacturing districts, but in many instances relatively trivial circumstances were suffi-

The great fairs



cient to occasion a notable gathering of traders. Many of the famous fairs of Europe were thus held in places of no especial importance otherwise. When such gatherings of traders appeared at a fair the period was usually extended, first to two or three days, then to a week, and finally perhaps to a month.

The foreign traders attending such fairs, like the retailers frequenting fairs of lesser import, were disposed to arrange

Cycles a circuit which would enable them to come in

contact with all the regions producing the goods

sought by them, so that the fairs which become prominent

in connection with the wholesale trade of Europe tend to

fall into more or less definite cycles. This tendency is most

clearly apparent in Continental Europe, where the fairs of

Champagne and of Flanders constitute two closely organ-

ized groups of fairs. There were six fairs in each group,

distributed throughout the year. As the manufacturers at-

tending the various fairs came from somewhat different

areas, the wholesale market was relatively comprehensive as

regards area and approximately continuous as regards time.

In England, the cycle of wholesale fairs was not so definitely organized: the fairs were not subject to any common

An English administrative regulations, as was the case with

cycle the fairs of Champagne, and as we have no

knowledge of the credit organization of the English fairs we

cannot be certain that the most distinctive features of a fair

cycle were present. The more important fairs, however,

succeeded each other in a convenient sequence and the

arrangements made by the royal treasury indicate the pres-

ence at these fairs of a substantially identical group of trad-

ers. By letters patent of November 16, 1240, the bailiffs of

Winchester were ordered to make known to all merchants

"the provision of the King and Council that the King's

prises<sup>1</sup> from merchants shall be paid at four terms of the year,

to wit, prizes due at the fair of Northampton in the fair of

St. Ives; prizes due in the latter, at the fair of Boston; prizes

in the latter, in the fair of Winchester; and those due in the

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, 151.



latter, in the fair of Northampton." <sup>1</sup> The group of fairs mentioned presents the following sequence: the fair of Saint Ives, eight days beginning Easter Monday; the fair of Boston, eight days beginning with the feast of Saint John the Baptist, June 25 to July 2; the fair at Winchester (Saint Giles's Fair) August 31 to September 15; the fair of Northampton, November 17 to 25. Other evidence shows that the merchants usually attended the fair at Lynn, immediately following the fair at Boston, and a fair at Stamford is mentioned as important, though perhaps not equally important. In so far as debts contracted at one fair could be paid at a subsequent fair, this English fair cycle closely resembles the Continental fairs. The King, at least, received goods and money due at one fair at a subsequent fair.

In picturesque accounts of fairs there is a tendency to emphasize the variety of goods displayed for sale, and one frequently carries away the impression that the <sup>Business of</sup> fairs, and particularly the great wholesale fairs, <sup>a fair</sup> were devoted to trading in all the goods known to the period. Distinction should be made between the classes of goods whose purchase and sale were the main purpose of the fair, and the classes of goods in which incidental trading was inevitable. The gathering of any great crowd of traders would require more than the usual activity of trade in food, especially cooked foods. Butchers, bakers, and all classes of cooks were thus a prominent feature of any fair. Possible disparities between the volume of goods brought to the fair and purchased there would inevitably require many merchants to add to their train of pack-animals. Dealing in horses, mules, and their equipment was therefore an incidental feature of every considerable fair. The assemblage of traders, furthermore, created a demand for more or less craft-work; blacksmiths, saddlers, harness-makers, barbers, tailors, and the like would all find special opportunities for custom. Carpenters would be in demand to put up and take down the light wooden booths that were used during the fair. The incidental work of the fair would thus be representative of

<sup>1</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls* 1232-47, 239.